

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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A STERN CHASE.

A STORY IN THREE PARTS.

BY MRS. CASHEL HOEY.

THE SECOND PART.

CHAPTER XI. AT THE QUINCES.

"HER husband!" exclaimed Madame Isambard. "Why, she had not heard of him for years! He had cruelly deserted her. What can have been his motive for seeking her out?"

"Perhaps it was repentance," said Lillias gently. "We may hope it was, although it came too late for her to know of it. This is what Mrs. Courtland says."

"Read it to me," said Madame Isambard, who did not seem to adopt the charitable suggestion of her friend.

Lillias read as follows:

"I could not write until after the funeral, and now I have something to tell that will surprise you nearly as much as it surprised us, and will be less grievous to you than to us, only because you did not know our poor friend, and do not know her little girl. On the day after Mrs. Willesden's death, a man who claimed to be her husband came here, and asked to see her. He gave his name as James Willesden, and Colonel Courtland was at once satisfied that he was really the husband of Mrs. Willesden. He is not a bad-looking man, and he has the appearance of one who may have been born a gentleman; but he is evidently poor, and was careful to proclaim himself so. His behaviour, on learning from me that his wife was dead, was proper enough; he did not pretend to much feeling, but he showed a decent anxiety to be assured that the poor woman had been assisted by the rites of her religion, and I was sorry I could not give him that assurance. There had been no time for anything of the kind. He

remained in the village, and attended the funeral, and he afterwards came to Lisles to see Colonel Courtland by appointment. In the interval we had consulted together, and talked with Dr. Fuller and our good Vicar about the child, and it had been agreed that she was to be provided for among us all somehow, and Colonel Courtland was prepared to give the child's father what we thought would be good news, as he must be aware that he was responsible for the child's support, and we had reason to know that he was in no position to undertake it readily. I had already got decent mourning for the little girl, and Colonel Courtland was to tell Mr. Willesden that his poor wife's small possessions—there were only a few articles of any value at all—should be carefully put away and kept for her daughter. I ought to tell you here that Mr. Willesden had seen the child, who had no remembrance of him, once only before the day of the funeral, and had seemed totally indifferent to her.

"Greatly to the surprise and regret of Colonel Courtland, Mr. Willesden absolutely declined his offer with respect to the little girl, and when I was sent for, and represented to him, as well as I could, the advantages of it, he was quite unmoved. Not only did he refuse to leave Dolores with us, although both the Colonel and I told him that he could see her at any time he liked, and should always be kept informed of her welfare, but he insisted on taking her away immediately, and declined to give us any information as to his intentions with regard to her, or where he intended to take her. I can't say he behaved ill; he was not insolent, he was simply imperturbably determined, and, as his right was unquestionable, we were helpless. To all my representations of the

child's interest, he merely replied, 'I am the child's father, madam, and the best judge of that.' And when the Colonel hinted at what he knew, through his own admission, of his poverty, he said: 'My daughter must share my fortunes.' I ought to tell you he had strongly asserted to Colonel Courtland, at their first interview, that his total inability to provide for her had led him to desert his wife. Being reminded of this, he took it very calmly, but said not a word of any resources that he may now have. I said that I hoped he would let us hear of the child, and that, if circumstances should lead him to change his mind, we should be willing to befriend her; but he answered, still not insolently, but with cold determination, that as his daughter's lot would be cast very differently from that which our charity offered her, he did not wish her to keep up useless and unbecoming associations, and so declined to hold any communication with us. I am almost ashamed to say how much I grieved at the idea of parting with the little girl, and how fearful I was of the effect on her, for she is a delicate and sensitive child, and she had quite understood and taken to heart her mother's death; but I saw at once that Mr. Willesden was not likely to consider my feelings. We gave up the attempt to dissuade him, and proceeded to the question of time. On this point he proved equally unmanageable. He had already lost too much time, he said, and must return to his employment without further delay. He did not state the nature of that employment, and he does not look as if he had any. He then said that he meant to go up to London by the six o'clock train on that same evening, and would take his daughter with him. I felt shocked, and showed it, saying something of the child's feelings, and the unkindness of taking her suddenly away just now from all whom she knew. He answered: 'When an unpleasant thing has to be done, the sooner it is done the better. The child must come with me.' I then objected on the score of her little wardrobe not being prepared, but he met that by saying that her box might be sent to Paddington Station, where he would call for it. A look from Colonel Courtland prevented me from making any other objection, and I merely said I would go and prepare the child. She has been in our house since her mother's death. He asked me very civilly to give him a few more minutes, and went

on to speak of Mrs. Willesden's 'effects'. He would beg of me, he said, to give all articles of clothing to the person who had taken care of her during her illness, and to let her papers, and certain articles of which he produced a list, be handed over to him at once. If Colonel Courtland had not been convinced that the man was really the person whom he claimed to be, the evidence of this list would have been conclusive; for I was acquainted with every item included in it, and had made them up into a parcel with my own hands the day before. I had only to say that the things were all at hand, but that, beyond some scraps in the desk, I had found no papers. He was surprised to hear this, and asked me, always very civilly, whether a strict search had been made. I said the search had been thorough, and that we were the more at a loss to account for there being no papers, because it was known that Mrs. Willesden had been writing for some time on the day of her death—I don't think I told you this in my former letter—and that not a trace of what she wrote was found. The girl left in charge of her declares she went into the room three times, and each time saw Mrs. Willesden busy at her task. On the pages of her blotting-book there are traces of her writing; but she did not send anything to be posted, and we can only surmise that some sudden change of purpose led to her destroying whatever it was she had written. We should have felt sure that she had written to Madame Isambard, only that I had done so for her two days before. In the confusion that followed the discovery of her death, and no special attention being directed to the matter, torn papers might or might not have been swept up from the floor of her room. There was no fire, and no candle, so she could not have burned them.

"Mr. Willesden was greatly perturbed when I told him that it was known she had been writing, but that no trace of what she had written was found; he quite lost his cool composure. Colonel Courtland thinks Mr. Willesden has an idea that his poor wife had written to him, and is frightened at the notion of her letter having fallen into somebody's hands, and he also thinks it likely that he has excellent reason to object to an occurrence of the kind. My husband's dislike and distrust of the man are pronounced.

"At first, when he explained Willesden's discomposure in this way, I did not think

he was right, because I took it that his wife had no more reason for writing to him on that particular day than on any other, and because she never had written to him, and did not know where he was. I have, however, come to agree with Colonel Courtland's view since I have had a talk with Dr. Fuller—who is very sorry for the child's fate—to whom I told this circumstance, for he has thrown a new light upon it. It seems that when Dr. Fuller saw poor Mrs. Willesden that morning, she questioned him calmly, but very closely, about her own state, and the possible duration, but great uncertainty, of her life, and he was quite frank with her. This was in his mind when he told me, at Middleton Hall, that he had seen her, and what he said made me feel sure that she had resolved that day to 'set her house in order'. What more likely than that she would write to her husband? What more natural than for him to believe that she had done so, and to be uneasy at such a witness against him as, no doubt, anything she might write, no matter how forgivingly, must have been.

"I have, however, wandered from my story. I brought the parcel, sealed and labelled, to Mr. Willesden, who opened it in a businesslike way, checked off its contents by his list, and stuffed it into his bag. There was a pause, during which Colonel Courtland and I looked awkward enough. Mr. Willesden broke it by saying that he would call at the gate for the child at half-past five, and would now wish us good-day. I tell you all this because of what comes after.

"'No, no,' said Colonel Courtland, 'we can't part with our little friend in that way. Mrs. Courtland and I would like to see the last of her. We will bring her to you at the railway-station. Look out for us on the platform at ten minutes before six.'

"Mr. Willesden looked anything but pleased, but he only said, 'Very well, as you choose,' and went away.

"'I shall find out whether he really goes to London, at all events,' said my husband; 'and we will contrive to keep an eye on the child.'

"I had a sad task, my dear Lillias—one I should be very sorry to go through again. The little girl's terror and grief were most painful to witness, and her frantic sorrow at parting with Julian (who has been very kind to her, you will be glad to hear) was quite dreadful. I could only advise, and

beg of her to be a good child, and try to please her father, and encourage her to hope that he will some day bring her back to Lisle, in that absurd way in which we all talk to children about the future—a thing they do not apprehend. We had the poor little creature—and her box, by Colonel Courtland's special desire—ready in good time, and we took her to the station. Mr. Willesden was there, and took no notice of the state little Dolores was in from crying; but he was not at all unkind to her. He had taken two third-class tickets for Paddington, and he put the child into the train at once, then he (not offensively) asked us to take leave of her. Of course we did so, and left her, cowed and shivering, to her fate. My husband took me out of the station, but we returned when the train was off, and he sent a telegram to Walter Ritchie, requesting him to meet that train at Paddington, to observe the person who should claim a box with the Little Choughton label upon it, and also the name 'Willesden' written on a card of Colonel Courtland's; then to ascertain to what address the box was taken, and communicate it to him by letter. We returned home, feeling very sad. As for me, this sudden clearing out of the cottage, and dispersion of what has been an interest and an occupation for so long, gives me a half-stunned feeling, and I am quite wretched about the child. I shall not send off my letter until Colonel Courtland has heard from Walter Ritchie. Our idea is that, if we succeed in discovering where she has been taken, we may be able to befriend her indirectly. Madame Isambard would be the very person to invent a means of our doing this. Mr. Willesden is aware that his poor wife was made known to us through the intervention of a friend, but he does not know the name. I refused to give it at my first interview with him, before there was any mention of the child. I have written fully because, according to your last, Madame Isambard will be with you when this reaches you, and all these details will be more interesting to her than to yourself, although half of you is always with us and all that we care about. Perhaps she may know something that would indicate the probable conduct of this man with regard to the child. Colonel Courtland is strongly impressed with the idea that Willesden had some motive in coming here to look after his wife, beyond either curiosity or interest, and that it has not been altogether

defeated by her death. He did not come to offer her a home, that is plain, for he declared that he was not able to pay for her funeral—no one having asked him to do so—yet he told Colonel Courtland that it suited his purpose just then to know where his wife was, and that he had paid for the tracing of her. That he has some scheme in hand which obliged him to refer in some way to his wife, we are convinced, and Colonel Courtland thinks it likely the child may also be in some way necessary to it, because he is sure that Mr. Willesden is not the man to encumber himself with a child for whom he does not care, and for whom he is offered a provision, unless there is something to gain by it."

(Added on the following day):

"I may close my budget, and send it off to you, dear Liliás. The telegram was successful. Walter Ritchie was on the platform when the train arrived, and close to the van when it was opened. A man, holding a little girl by the hand, claimed the box, and carried it away on his shoulder, the child carrying a bag. Walter followed them to a decent-looking house, Number One Hundred and Forty, Praed Street, and saw them enter it. Before post-hour yesterday, he had ascertained that the owner of the house is a respectable person, a bookbinder by trade; that Mr. Willesden occupies two rooms on the second-floor; and that he is a newspaper-writer in a small way. You are likely to see Colonel Courtland soon. He was going up to town about the final arrangements for Julian, in any case, and I shall send him off as soon as I can to recover his spirits at The Quinces after this sad affair."

Madame Isambard did not interrupt Liliás once during the reading of this letter, but her face expressed the perplexity and concern with which she heard it.

"It is a dreadful thing for the child," was her first remark.

"Do you think Colonel Courtland is right?" asked Liliás. "Do you think this man has a scheme, and can you throw any light upon it?"

"I don't know what to say. All the circumstances favour the Colonel's suspicion; and yet, what good can the child be to him?"

"Could the mother have been entitled to money in any way, and he be able to get at it through the child?"

"That's a sharp suggestion, Liliás, and it might be so. But it is highly impro-

bable, from what I do know of the mother's history, little as that is. She told me that she had not a relation or a friend; that she and her child were alone in the world. If there had been any on whom she had claims, she would have appealed to them when she was deserted by her husband. Nay, more, if she had any such resource, would he not have made her try it, supposing his plea of poverty to be true—and I don't see why we are not to believe it?"

"Still, it is such an unaccountable thing that he should take the child. How is it to be explained?"

"Perhaps only in a way which I have frequently found safe and sure—by imputing it to the inconsistency and contradictoriness of human beings. It is the last thing I should have expected the man to do, therefore I ought not to be surprised that he has done it. What a misfortune for the poor little girl! How admirable the conduct of Colonel and Mrs. Courtland! I wonder whether they have any idea of what exceptional people they are, when they do, and plan to do, good in that matter-of-course way of theirs."

"Not the least; it comes naturally to them. For how long had this poor Mrs. Willesden lost sight of her husband?"

"I could not tell you exactly; she never said; but the child, you see, had no remembrance of her father, so that she must have been quite a baby when he left them."

"What is the child's age?"

"Six or seven now, I should think."

In the course of the day Liliás wrote to Mrs. Courtland on behalf of herself and Madame Isambard, and that evening the friends, having recurred to the subject, Madame Isambard remarked that she had been struck by Mrs. Courtland's saying in her letter that Liliás would be glad to hear of Julian's being kind to Dolores Willesden.

"Is that youth giving them trouble?" she asked; "or have you had reason to alter your good opinion of him?"

"Not seriously, to answer your last question first. I do think him rather selfish and inconsiderate, and perhaps I should hardly have expected him to be kind to a child. As for his giving his uncle and aunt trouble, I fear he does so sometimes. The Colonel is, as you know, the gentlest of men, but he has strict notions, too, and a horror of debt. Julian is

not careful, and I know his uncle is sometimes uneasy. He has double anxiety about the boy, just as he has double tenderness for him, on account of his father."

"The Colonel's brother? What did he do?"

"Ruined himself, and other people, I believe, by gambling, and extravagance, and want of any kind of principle; broke his wife's heart, and left his son to the mercy of his brother."

"Very well he might. No mercy was ever more tender or more sure."

"True; but Mr. Courtland did not know that. He had not seen his brother for many years; never took the trouble to keep up any correspondence with him while he was in India; and when he died—at some gambling-place abroad—the people about him found only a memorandum of Major Courtland's station in Bengal. A subscription was raised, and the child was sent out to his uncle. Papa told me the story."

"H'm! Mrs. Courtland does not like Julian."

"Why do you think so? She is not so fond of him as the Colonel is, because it isn't her way, and she sees his faults more clearly."

"It's more than that, my dear. She just tolerates him for her husband's sake, and she knows a great deal more about him than the Colonel knows, or than you know. The last time I met them all here, I read that very plainly. Ah me! I hope he may not give them a headache some day, for they are good people, and ought, if anybody ought, to be secure from heart-aches."

"I hope not, indeed," said Liliás earnestly. "He promises to settle down steadily now to his work, and, when he is out of his articles, the Colonel means to buy him a partnership in an eminent firm of solicitors, which he has got the chance of doing through papa's friend, Mr. Dexter."

"And does Julian Courtland take kindly to the profession of a solicitor?"

"As kindly as he would take to anything that means work," said Liliás, with an indulgent smile. "We must not be hard on him, dear Madame Isambard; he is very young."

"That is to say, he is about four or five years younger than you are, Liliás, who at his age were a very wise person. I wonder whether our oddly different reckoning of years to men and women is very injurious to the men."

"All girls have not so much to make them sober as I had," said Liliás, with a little sigh and a wistful look which were both habitual. "To see Mr. Ritchie's name again reminded me of so much."

"Reminded her!" thought Madame Isambard. "Poor girl! I wish she could forget."

On the following Monday, Liliás was again left alone for a while. Mrs. Norton—who still resided with her former pupil, but was given to going on visits, accompanied by Azor, the successor to Amoret, deceased—was just then staying at a delightful house in Finsbury Crescent, where whist-parties were of nightly occurrence. Liliás liked solitude at all times; just at this time it was particularly welcome, for her mind had reverted to the past in a way which she felt was almost superstitious, and she was glad to escape observation and the having to play company to anyone.

Two days after Madame Isambard left The Quinces, Liliás was sought and found in the garden by a servant, who said that a gentleman had called and wished to see her on business.

"Business! I have no business," said Liliás. "It must be a mistake. Did not the gentleman give you a card?"

"No, ma'am. He said his name was of no consequence, as you did not know him; but I was to say he was sure you would see him, as he came about Cuba."

The man had no notion of the meaning of the words he uttered, and was surprised by their effect upon his mistress.

"Cuba?" she repeated; "Cuba! A name that I do not know!"

The colour forsook her face, and she was unable to move for a few moments; but she recovered herself by a strong effort, and, sending the servant on to say that she would see the gentleman, she followed him, trembling, into the house.

CHRONICLES OF ENGLISH COUNTIES.

SUSSEX. PART II.

BEST and most characteristic of Sussex towns is Lewes, that hangs on the skirt of the hills, in the narrow gap where the river Ouse finds its way to the sea between the great chalk buttresses of the South Downs. Its streets show a mixture of quaintness and comfort, picturesque ascents and graceful curves; and the river, with its barges and high-arched bridge, forms pleasing

pictures with the background of curving hills and the wreck of the stern castle that frowns from its grassy mound. In the green valley below the town stand the fragments of an ancient priory—the insignificant remnants of a once noble building, whose gray ruins contrast with the greensward of the pleasure-grounds about them.

It is probable that Lewes was once a British stronghold, the city of refuge of the pastoral tribes whose flocks fed on the short, sweet grass of the far-reaching Downs. Everywhere that the hills have been left in ancient pasture are found the traces of the camps, and folds, and villages of earlier settlers—of their burying-places, of the mounds they raised to the memory of their great chiefs, of the sacred circles within which the mostly cruel rites of early religion were enacted.

The Saxons seized the advantageous post at an early period. They named the place from the mount where the district assembly was held, Loewe, which Norman scribes softened to Laquis, or Lewes. At Lewes, according to Domesday, if the King sent a fleet to keep the sea, twenty shillings were collected of every burgess, which were paid to those who manned the vessels. Whoever sold a horse in the town paid a penny to the bailiff, and the purchaser paid another; for an ox a halfpenny, for a man fourpence—so that a man-slave was more valuable than an ox. For bloodshed the penalty was seven and fourpence. Other crimes paid on a higher scale, while marital offences were punished by the forfeiture of the offenders themselves. The man became the property of the King, and the woman of the Archbishop. There were two moneyers in the place, each of whom paid twenty shillings on a re-coinage.

At the Conquest, Lewes received as its overlord one of the best and most amiable of the Conqueror's great men. William de Warrenne was a man who represented the gentler phase of his master's character. A friend of the family, and the Conqueror's chosen son-in-law, he got his share of the good things that were going, not so much for his efficiency in hammering the unfortunate Saxons, as out of the love and affection that were borne him by those of the household of the stern Duke William. And when De Warrenne built his strong castle on the height, the townsfolk in the dwellings clustered below found in him no unkind or ungenerous lord.

The quiet little town among the hills might seem to have little connection with the doings of the great world, but the movements of the age had nevertheless some little influence on its fortunes. De Warrenne and his wife Gundrada were sincerely pious, after the fashion of the age, and when matters were quiet in England, the pair set out on a leisurely pilgrimage to Rome, visiting on their way the great religious houses of Normandy and France. At that time the great Gregory occupied the chair of St. Peter, and in his quarrels with the German Cæsar the frontiers of Italy were often ravaged by the troops of the Suabian emperor. And thus Earl William and his noble spouse were detained on their peaceful pilgrimage, and rested for a long while at the famous Abbey of Clugny, whose monks, cultivated and refined above the common, made themselves so agreeable to their guests, that they were invited—entreated, indeed—to come and form a settlement in England, under the walls of the Earl's strong castle.

Thus was founded the Priory of Lewes, where, later, the Earl and his consort came to pass their declining years, and passed away and were buried in the chapter-house of the convent. The priory increased and flourished, and buildings and grounds occupied a large extent of the pleasant valley, while a stately church became the burial-place of many generations of powerful nobles—De Warrennes, Clares, De Veres, St. Johns, and Fitzalans, whose benefactions enriched the settlement. At the dissolution of the monasteries, noble tombs and monuments shared in the general ruin. Church and convent were levelled to the ground, and the very sites of the different buildings were forgotten.

But when a branch line of railway was made to Lewes about forty years ago, which cut through the site of the old priory, the workmen disinterred two ancient leaden coffins, on which were boldly incised the names of William and Gundrada. Much interest was taken in the discovery by antiquarians all over the land, and the mouldering relics were re-interred in a beautiful mausoleum erected for the purpose in the adjacent parish church of Southover, where the leaden coffin-lids are still to be seen. Existing families claim descent from William and Gundrada, and genealogists take much interest in the question as to whether Gundrada was really the legitimate daughter of the Conqueror, and we are promised an authori-

tative settlement of the question from the researches of Sir G. Duckett among the national archives of France.

The castle is still an interesting ruin, with one of its towers now occupied as a local museum by the County Archaeological Society. The chief event in its annals, as in those of town and priory, is connected with the great battle that was fought on a neighbouring hill, which has ever since borne the name of Mount Harry. Here, Simon de Montfort completely defeated King Henry the Third and his son, Prince Edward. The castle and priory were occupied by the royal party before the battle; but the castle surrendered at once when its garrison were apprised of the King's defeat, while the priory, which had been held for a time by Prince Edward and his defeated troops, was sacked and partly burnt by the victorious barons. It is hardly correct, by the way, to speak of Edward's command as defeated. These were opposed by the citizens of London, who mustered strongly under the champion of municipal rights. But Edward drove the Londoners from the field with such slaughter, that the streets of the City were afterwards filled with mourners. And then, like Prince Rupert under similar circumstances, Edward returned to find the day lost beyond redemption. The capitulation which King and Prince made with the victorious Earl is known as the Mise of Lewes.

Since these events, however, little has occurred to disturb the tranquillity of the old-fashioned town, of which Taylor, the Water Poet, writes:

I jog'd on to Lewes,
And there I found no beggars, scolds, or shrewes.

Perhaps the ladies of Lewes, however, owed a little to the exigencies of rhyme. But that tranquillity has often been disturbed by the annual celebration of the Bonfire Boys, who, on the 5th of November, take possession of the town and make huge bonfires in its principal streets, while blazing tar-barrels are kicked about, and squibs and crackers fly in all directions.

Attempts have often been made to put a stop to these popular saturnalia, which are not confined to Lewes, but are, or used to be, rampant in many other towns of Sussex and Surrey. But the country, as a Welsh proverb has it, is more powerful than a lord, or even than a mayor or chief-constable. Special-constables have been sworn in, and the military called out; but always, when the pressure was withdrawn,

the Bonfire Boys have carried out their plans. On one occasion, it is recorded that the Mayor of Lewes, who was also a banker and a man of popularity and influence in the neighbourhood, determined to suppress the bonfire-celebration as a dangerous nuisance to the inhabitants. A large number of special-constables were sworn in, and the mayor, on horseback, took his place at their head. But the populace were not to be denied. The mayor was surrounded, dragged off his horse, and placed astride on the parapet of Lewes Bridge, where he was offered the alternative of withdrawing his veto on the bonfire, or of being pitched into the river to sink or swim. The Mayor wisely chose the former, and was loudly cheered by the rioters, who carried him in triumph to his home.

And to this day, on the anniversary of St. Bonfire, shops are shut, windows are barricaded, and everything left clear for the Bonfire Boys, who generally organise a procession of an elaborate kind, with characters in costume, men in armour, and the like—an interesting survival of the fêtes and pageants of old times.

For it is difficult to believe that a festival clung to with such tenacity by the populace—and it is noteworthy that the Bonfire Boys are chiefly recruited from the rural population, and come from the villages and hamlets round about—it is difficult to believe that such a festival should have originated with Gunpowder Plot and the Guy Fawkes celebration. More probably we have here the remains of some ancient and perhaps heathen festival, specially dear to the population of the region which stretches from the boundaries of Kent to the confines of Cornwall; while Gunpowder Plot only furnished an occasion for the perpetuation of the popular fête.

Without further venturing, however, into such a controversial subject, we may drop down the river by barge or skiff to Newhaven, where the river-mouth forms the well-known packet station in communication with Dieppe. People who travel that way to France rarely see anything of Newhaven itself, which is rather a snug little place—with a quaint old church perched up over the main street, and below it a pleasant inn—which received Louis Philippe on his flight from the revolution of 1848, and where Tipperale might once, and perhaps still may be had. Worthy Tipper himself sleeps in the churchyard close by, with a facetious epitaph over his remains. Close by is another

memorial of a more serious complexion, to the memory of Captain Hanson and a hundred and four officers and men of a sloop of war, which was wrecked off the headland close by. Many bodies were washed ashore and interred in Newhaven churchyard.

The newness of Newhaven is only comparative, even as far as the haven itself is concerned, while the settlement itself, under its ancient title of Meeching, is of far higher antiquity. Some time in the reign of Henry the Eighth, when the former harbour of Seaford had been silted up and the river found a more direct channel to the sea, with a little help in the way of cutting and embankment, a new haven was actually formed. The old bed of the river, which ran parallel with the shore for a couple of miles, may be traced as far as Seaford, and it has been turned to account in a singular way, by the establishment of large flour-mills upon a part of the ancient water-course, which is filled twice a day by the tide, when the sea-water flowing back is made the motive-power of the great water-wheels, which perform their functions with admirable regularity and power.

The sight of these great, white, floury mills, with their comfortable dwellings and famous gardens, where flourish fruits and flowers, and where the espaliers are covered with luxuriant wall-fruit, is singular enough, on the bleak margin of the sea, with only a huge bank of shingle protecting the whole establishment from the tide, which is boisterous enough at times; while the notion of the fierce ocean being tamed and made to turn a mill is one that affords a good deal of suggestive pabulum for thought.

Seaford itself, with its bold cliffs and brisk sea, and far-stretching rocks peopled with zoophytes, has an interesting history of its own, only there is so little remaining as a peg to hang it upon. There is the Old Tree Inn, suggestive of the meeting of the primitive court of the cinque port under the shelter of some ancient tree, whose branches might furnish the means for the ready carrying-out of its sentences. The old municipal privileges still exist, the town has its bailiff and its jurats, but such life as exists in the place is altogether of the railway and sea-bathing era.

Beyond you may ramble along the coast till you are brought up by the little river Cuckmere, singular among the rivers on the coast for never having been the seat

of any considerable town or village, while the haven at its mouth, although not a bad one, is only used by the coastguard. Beyond rises the noble headland of Beachy Head, and then come the flats of Pevensey.

Turning westwards towards Brighton the way lies over the steep escarpment of cliffs, with only a few perilous gaps and descents to the sea till we come to Rottingdean, where a narrow valley holds a little settlement of lodging-houses, with a strip of beach and sand which affords a landing-place for fishing-boats and a space for a few bathing-machines to stand.

And yet we hear of the French landing here once upon a time. It was just after the death of the old lion, Edward the Third, and the government was in the slothful hands of John of Gaunt, and the French were flouting us everywhere along the southern coasts; when a number of galleys took the strand at Rottingdean, and landed their crews, hoping to make a successful raid on Lewes Priory after a short march over the downs. But the Prior mustered his forces, and was joined by the fighting-men of the district, who drove the French back to their ships, although the invaders managed to capture the Prior himself, whom they carried off, and held to ransom. Since then the French have made no other attempts upon Rottingdean.

When we reach Brighton we are in the presence of a civilisation whose chronicles go back little farther than the close of the last century, and the wild and wicked days of the Regency. The finished gentleman of faultless attire, who built the Pavilion and first made Brighton fashionable, has left his mark in so many memoirs of the period that little that is not worn and trite can be collected about the Prince and Mrs. FitzHerbert, and their connection with Brighton. But the following anecdotes of the doings at the Pavilion in its palmy days may have some interest for those of a gastronomic turn. The teller of the story was a "vieille moustache," whose father had held a post in the Court, and who took his boy one day to survey the wonders of the Pavilion. The Oriental splendours of the hybrid palace were duly admired, but the sight which most touched the susceptibilities of the schoolboy was the kitchen, vast and bright, and gleaming with full-charged batteries de cuisine, served by an array of men-cooks in snowy white caps and costumes, and a number of buxom kitchen-maids. But most of all was his

wonder excited by the sight of a long and glowing range, before which no fewer than six plump and juicy legs of mutton were revolving on the spit, slowly dripping gravy, and diffusing a most appetising odour around.

"And what are these for?" ventured to ask the boy.

"These," said the chief cook blandly, "are for his royal highness's own luncheon."

The boy stood aghast before a capacity transcending even schoolboy imagination, when the cook went on to explain that when sufficiently cooked the oyster-piece of each leg of mutton was cut out and placed in a *pâté*, which was his royal highness's favourite *bonne bouche*.

Before the Prince's time, people used to talk about his sacred majesty King Charles the Second—a far cleverer and more estimable character than George, after all—and how a certain master of a collier, Captain Tetttersell, whose grave is still to be found in the old churchyard, was the means of effecting his majesty's escape after his adventure in the oak at Boscabel. The inn where the King slept for a night, in West Street, has, ever since the Restoration, been known as *The King's Head*, and his majesty was escorted by the gallant Tetttersell to Shoreham, where he embarked in the collier and was landed at Fécamp.

In the same churchyard of the old parish church is the tomb of Phoebe Hessel, who successfully assumed the rôle of a man for many years, served as a soldier at Fontenoy, and was as stalwart and masculine in appearance as any grenadier of them all.

Westwards of Brighton the fine open sea-front ends in the sinuous backwaters of Shoreham Harbour, the entrance to which was probably at one time much nearer Brighton, and opposite the ancient settlement of Aldington, a ruined town, of which only remains a fragment of the parish church. Many discoveries of ancient remains, Roman or Roman-British, point to the existence of a considerable population here, who probably migrated to the once important port of Shoreham, which after long centuries of decay has once more experienced a revival of prosperity. The fine old church at Shoreham is rich in detail of Norman and Early English work.

From this point the line of downs which has followed the coastline from Beachy Head retires farther inland, and the coast itself loses much of its interest, as a long

expanse of flat and fertile country is reached, with Worthing and Littlehampton on the line of route, but with nothing calling for particular attention till we reach the peninsula of Selsea. And at Selsea we are on the site of one of the earliest ecclesiastical settlements in the kingdom, while north and south are brought together in its connection with the history of Wilfrid, the ambitious and stirring prelate of Northumbria. Wilfrid was driven into exile by the influence of the new primate, and took refuge in this barren spot, where the King of the South Saxons gave him the land of eighty-seven families to maintain his company. Baeda explains how the place is called Selsea, as being the island of the Sea Calf—a place encompassed by the sea on all sides except the west, where is an entrance about the cast of a sling in width.

Much changed is the outline of the coast just here, if Baeda's description was then correct, although but a slight depression of the land would convert Selsea into a sea-girt isle. But tradition asserts that the peninsula once stretched far to the eastward, and the bay in that direction bears the name of the Park, and is said to have been the park of the old Bishops of Selsea, who, good souls, had probably little notion that such appendages to a Bishop's seat would ever become usual. The sea-calves were probably the only deer that ever browsed in that park, for the land seems rather to have gained than lost in historical times, and the story of a cathedral lost in the sea is probably only a variation of the pretty and widely-spread legend:

As the fisherman strays,
When the clear cold eve's declining,
He sees the round towers of other days,
In the wave beneath him shining.

The good Northumbrian bishop, however, who had travelled far and seen many customs of many lands, taught, it is said, the fishermen of Selsea how to fish with the long seine nets, and thus largely increased the produce of their fisheries. Since his time, no doubt, the seals have departed, their dark forms are no longer to be seen basking on the wet sands. But the whole coast is rather lonely and deserted, with little attractions for visitors, while a range of dangerous shoals makes seamen give a wide berth to Selsea Bill.

Another point of antiquarian interest in the neighbourhood is Bosham, on a creek of Chichester Harbour, where Earl Harold had a seat in the days of the Confessor, and from which he sailed on that ill-starred

embassy to Duke William, whose incidents, including the start from Bosham, the shipwreck and captivity, the rescue by Duke William, the fatal oath upon the concealed relics, are portrayed with such graphic force in the Bayeux Tapestry.

Chichester Harbour is one of the network of inlets that made the coast from here to Southampton Water such a promising field for the exploits of pirates and marauders, whether Saxon or Scandinavian.

One of the most successful of these adventurers was Cissa, who took possession of the old walled Roman station, and gave his name to it, as Cisseceastor. This is a well-established fact, else the popular name of Chichester seems to be peculiarly appropriate. Only Chichester was not noted for its church till after the Norman invasion, when the Bishop's seat was removed from the lonely peninsula of Selsea to the more prosperous settlement of Cissa.

Chichester still retains a trace of its Roman origin in the alignment of its principal streets directed to the cardinal points of the compass. Notwithstanding the sounding name of Chichester Harbour, there is a peculiarly inland character in the appearance of the city, and the winding creek that sometimes brings a small coaster to discharge its cargo is a mile and a half distant.

When Sussex was parcelled out by the Conqueror among his chiefs—for there was originally no general earldom of Sussex, but the different Rapes, with their strongholds, formed so many separate principalities—Chichester fell to Roger de Montgomery, who also took possession of the commanding site of Arundel and its adjoining demesnes. No traces are left of the strong castle that Roger built at Chichester, although the walls of the town can still be traced, and here and there, with their semicircular towers, form pleasant terraces, planted with trees, and overlooking the environs of the city. There is a fine central cross, too, of the fifteenth century, and the Guildhall is an interesting Early English chapel, once belonging to the convent of Grey Friars. And the Bishop's palace is a fine ancient building, with traces about it of the handiwork of many succeeding ages. The cathedral is remarkable for its narrow escape from destruction in 1861, when its central steeple came down with a tremendous crash, and terribly damaged the whole edifice. Spire, however, and cathedral are

now replaced as nearly as possible after the old model. The city and its environs have proved rich in Roman remains, many of which have been dispersed, but sufficient are left to form a very instructive local museum. It is interesting, too—in connection with the inscription commemorating the existence of a guild of iron-workers at Chichester in Roman times—to find that the last remnant of the industrial population of the district lingered in the form of a colony of needle-makers till far into the last century. Then Birmingham and Redditch gave the coup de grâce to the last of the workers in steel and iron. These needle-makers had mostly lived outside the city-gates, clustered around the then ancient church of St. Pancras, until the days of the civil wars, when, in preparation for a siege, the church itself and many of the needle-makers' dwellings were levelled to the ground.

In Sussex, as elsewhere, the townspeople mostly favoured the Parliamentary cause, but the gentry were strong for the King. Soon after the battle of Edgehill the King came from the western counties as far as Hounslow, where a deputation from the gentry of Sussex waited upon him, and proposed to raise the southern counties in his behalf. The King granted the requisite authority, and the attempt was begun by Chichester being seized and fortified as a place of arms. But as a general rising the movement failed. The gentry of the south did not generally respond to the call. John Evelyn, for instance, the friend of Pepys, and his brother diarist, sent a man and horse, but prudently stayed away himself. And thus Sir Edmund Waller, moving against the Royalists, was able soon to surround and invest Chichester. After a siege of twelve days, during which the north-west tower of the cathedral was battered down by the enemy's shot, Chichester surrendered, and the King's cause was lost in the county.

This event was the last of the stirring episodes of the city history. But it has its niche in literary memorabilia as the birth-place of the poet Collins. William Collins was the son of a hatter at Chichester—a hatter of substance, who was also an alderman of the city. The poet received his early education at the Grammar School of Chichester—Bishop Story's grammar-school—though he afterwards passed to Winchester, and Magdalen, Oxford. He began poetry at an early age, quite in the modern fashion, by writing verses in a magazine—the old

Gentleman's Magazine—verses addressed to Aurelia, of a gallant, if insipid complexion. But, indeed, the amatory strain was never congenial to our poet, who, it has been remarked, in his one famous poem of the Passions, has left out the one universal dominant passion of love.

With the literary career of Collins Sussex, indeed, has little to do, but he came back at the close of it, shattered in mind and health, to die in the old home in a kind sister's arms, wrecked and decrepit, yet only in the thirty-fifth year of his age. Well might he invoke the care of gentle pity:

Wild Arun, too, has heard thy strains,
And Echo, 'midst my native plains,
 Been sooth'd by Pity's lute.
There first the wren thy myrtles shed
On gentle Otway's infant head;
 To him thy cell was shown.

And the mention of Otway may bring us to the early scenes of more than one Sussex poet—a remarkable galaxy indeed to arise from no extended radius, and of a race not in its usual fibre much noted for poetic texture.

BROOMS AND BROOMSTICKS.

DESPISE not, gentle reader, the subject of this article. For in that well-worn broom you see a type of many a gallant public servant. Always ready for duty at a moment's notice; always well to the front when dirty or disagreeable work is to be done; ever ready for a "brush" with the enemy; and, when the work is done, put back into a corner and forgotten till its services are once more needed. How many a great man has been rewarded because he had a good broom to do him service? How many times, when a great man has blundered, and the work consequently been ill-performed, has the fault been laid on the broom?

Thus, although condemned to bear a part in menial tasks, it is not therefore necessarily mean and ignoble.

We cannot all choose our parts in the drama of life. Some are so fortunate as to be leading tragedians, while others must be content to carry a banner. Some must be captains, some private soldiers. One man sits on a throne, another labours in a mine. To each his work, and happy he who does it manfully.

Act well thy part, there all the honour lies.
Consider that even the highest may be

brought down, and sink to the basest uses. As Shakespeare said:

Imperious Caesar, dead and turn'd to clay,
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away:
O that that earth, which kept the world in awe,
Should patch a wall to expel the winter's flaw!

Was not a great and heroic general of the later days of the Roman Empire reduced to cry in the streets, "Give an obolus to Belisarius, who rose by merit and was cast down by envy"? Does not everyone know that the "Blind Beggar of Bethnal Green", the father of "Prettie Bessie", was really "an Earl of high degree"?

How many a career commenced in the university has closed in the workhouse, or the tramps' lodging! How many a thoroughbred has done his last mile in a night-cab!

Remembering, then, to what the best of us may come, let us not despise the broom because it is a common domestic servant. One of its fellow-servants is coveted by the highest peers of England, and donned with pride and pleasure by the greatest potentates of the world, as the emblem of the "Most noble Order of the Garter", which, according to Selden, "exceeds in majesty, honour, and fame, all chivalrous orders in the world." Another household servant gives its name to the next grand order—namely, that of the "Bath".

The broom also can claim connection with England's royalty, and, what is more, can date back some centuries earlier than the Garter. For does it not belong to the family of "the proud Plantagenets"? Did not the first Count of Anjou adopt it as the badge of his house, in remembrance of his having caused himself to be scourged in penance for some crime; in fact, to commemorate his having been well birched for being naughty? It will thus be seen that the birch is the head of the broom family by virtue of its royal connections. But it may be said to be not only first in peace, but also (like Washington) first in war; for, at the end of the year 1652, the gallant Dutch admiral, Von Tromp, after defeating Blake, sailed up the Channel, with a broom at his mast-head, to denote that he had swept his foes from the seas. His boast, however, was not long maintained; as in the next year the English inflicted three severe defeats upon the Dutch, in the last of which the gallant Von Tromp was slain.

As becomes such a prominent object in society, the broom is undoubtedly pro-

tected by Magna Charta, which specially provides that the "contentment"—i.e., chattels—necessary to each man's station, as the arms of a gentleman, the plough of a peasant, shall be exempt from seizure. Consequently, the broom of the crossing-sweeper, as being the chattel necessary for the obtaining of his livelihood, is under the guardianship of the great charter of our liberties.

The birch-broom has, of course, been swept into the great legal net, and has been the subject of a law-case. Lord Erskine became possessed of an estate in Sussex, which grew nothing but stunted birches. As the land did not seem capable of improvement, he had the birches made into brooms, which were sold throughout the country. One of the sellers being brought before the magistrates for hawking without a license, Erskine defended him, and contended that there was a clause to meet this particular case.

Being asked what it was, he answered : "The sweeping clause, your worship, which is further fortified by a proviso, that nothing herein contained shall prevent any proprietor of land from vending the produce thereof in any manner that to him shall seem fit."

Like many another scion of good family, the broom has dabbled in the occult sciences, and has been connected with the "black art". Everyone is acquainted with the celebrated broomstick of St. Dunstan, who is said to have been an adept in alchemy and magic. Barham, in his *Ingladsby Legends*, has sung the tragic fate of the poor lay-brother Peter, who, being anxious to gain a knowledge of some of the magical mysteries of his master—

While the saint thought him sleeping,
Was listening and peeping
And watching his master the whole afternoon ;

and hearing the saint as

He utter'd the words of power,
And called to his broomstick to bring him a seat.
Peeped through the keyhole, and what saw he
there?
Why, a broomstick bringing a rush-bottomed
chair.

We all know the dread result of Peter's "little knowledge" and the large order for beer executed by the broomstick in that thorough manner so characteristic of the family ; which leads the poet to say—

Above all, what I wish to impress on both sexes,
Is keep clear of broomsticks, old Nick, and three
XXX's.

Barham seems to have had a wholesome

dread of broomsticks, for in another poem he says :

Don't meddle with broomsticks—they're Booleze-
bub's switches.

In bygone days many a strong, bold man must have looked with awe upon some old crone's broom, as it stood in a corner of her hovel, thinking it perchance a possible diabolical steed, on which she rode through the air to some midnight meeting where unholy revels would be held under the presidency of "The Old Man". The ideas which now produce only laughter, would in those days cause many a stout-hearted peasant to cower in abject fear at the wind whistling overhead as he crossed the lonely moor on a wild night—his fancy conjuring up calls and shouts above him, and his imagination picturing evil-minded crones flying through the air, each mounted on her broomstick :

Knees and nose in a line with the toes,
Sitting their brooms like so many Ducrows.

The old popular ideas of the witch are well pictured in the lines :

As they sat in that old and haunted room,
In each one's hand was a large birchbroom,
On each one's head was a steeple-crown'd hat,
On each one's knee was a coal-black cat.

The birch has not only been the badge of royalty and the ensign of war, but also the emblem of authority in the seats of learning. Dr. Busby, the Master of Westminster, who kept his hat on in the presence of King Charles whilst showing him over the school, that he might lose none of his awful authority with the boys, was a fierce wielder of this weapon.

Shenstone's well-known description of the village schoolmistress aptly conveys the feelings of dread and horror which the birch conveyed to the juvenile mind :

And in her hand, for sceptre, she does wield
Tway birchen sprays ; with anxious fear entwined,
With dark mistrust and sad repentance filled ;
And steadfast hate, and sharp affliction join'd,
And fury uncontroll'd, and chastisement unkind.

The broom family has thus been shown to hold a prominent place in the world, and to be honoured in royal, warlike, legal, scientific, and scholastic society. Any broom on which one casts an eye may therefore become a legitimate subject of contemplation. Even a new broom—and new things are generally the most barren of suggestion—reminds us how soon the energy with which a task is commenced dies out as it becomes familiar—a fact so well acknowledged as to become proverbialised in the words, "A new broom sweeps clean."

Here is a broom in the hands of Betty, the housemaid. With what a grace she twirls the dust out of the corners as John, the footman, passes with "lingering steps and slow"; with what art she displays her attractive form as she wields her broom in pretended unconsciousness of the approach of the baker, who stands at the tradesmen's entrance a lost man from that moment! At how many conferences with Mary, next door, has the broom been present, while confidences and opinions have been exchanged concerning "Master", "Missus", or "Them girls"! The truth as to "missus's" back hair or front teeth, as to master's temper or Miss Emily's young man, is passed over the garden-wall, while the broom stands between the gossips, a ready excuse, if needed, for their presence. Aye; and though Betty, by the wielding of her broom, may conquer the heart and become the bride of the stolid baker, or the dashing, wild young butcher, may it not be written in the book of fate that he will some day use the broomstick as an instrument of conjugal chastisement?

Here we see half-a-dozen brooms at work, busily clearing the road of yesterday's mud. What a varied lot of men those scavengers seem! Everyone a distinct type, and evidently with a history of his own. Men are not "brought up" to this business; they "come down" to it. Note that man who steps listlessly aside as the hansom cab whirls by, receiving in silence cabby's abuse or chaff. He is now a poor parochial drudge, though he may once have held a good position and been whirled in his own carriage past just such another group as this. He may have risked his thousands on the race-course or the Stock Exchange, till at last bad luck overtook him, or he may have been "pushed", and "chanced it" as far as signing someone else's name, in hopes of buying back the bit of paper in time; but the wheel of fortune was against him, and he had to bid farewell for ever to respect and comfort, to clothes of the best cut, cigars of the finest brands, dry champagne, and plenty of loose cash. Now watch him as he takes up his broom and sweeps on with a vacant face, as he will sweep on from day to day till he himself is mercifully gathered by the great sweeper into the grand heap of dust.

Here, at this shop-door, we see a pile of brooms bound together in dozens. This reminds us of the two rival broom-sellers, who were evidently of the metal

of which great speculators are made. "Bob," says one, "it beats me how you manage to sell your brooms cheaper than I do, for I steal my material." "You are easy to beat, my boy," says Bob; "I steal my brooms ready made."

Dean Swift wrote a meditation upon a broomstick, in which he says: "Surely mortal man is a broomstick." He compares man, wearing his own hair, to the branch of the tree with its proper leaves and twigs, till intemperance lops off his green boughs, leaving him a withered trunk. "He then flies to art, and puts on a periwig, as the broomstick has the birchen twigs attached to it." He proceeds to say that "a broomstick is an emblem of a tree standing on its head. Man is but a topsyturvy creature, his animal faculties perpetually mounted on his rational, his head where his heels should be, grovelling on the earth! And yet with all his faults, he sets up to be a universal reformer or corrector of abuses, a remover of grievances, rakes into every slut's corner of nature, bringing hidden corruptions to the light, and raises a mighty dust where there was none before, sharing deeply all the while in the very same pollutions he pretends to sweep away."

To how many in London is a broom the only means by which starvation may be kept off! How many a lad or man clutches the handle of his broom—every knot and inequality in it familiar to his touch—as he would the hand of an old friend! It is, perhaps, the only true friend he has in the world; the companion of his wanderings, of his sorrows, and of his few and meagre joys. Perhaps it is idealised in his mind into a sentient being, to whom he confides his hopes and fears; to whom, perchance, he talks as a man is apt to do with his dog. Despise not his weakness; you cannot expect much firmness of spirit in one whose whole worldly wealth consists of an old broom. Yet such is the position of some who, in other eyes than ours, are "but a little lower than the angels". One of the most pathetic passages in our literature has to do with a broom—the scene in which poor Jo visits the gate of the vile burial-ground, where the only friend he ever knew lies in a nameless grave. "He holds the gate with his hands, and looks in between the bars; stands looking in for a little while. He then, with an old broom he carries, softly sweeps the step, and makes the archway clean. He does so, very busily and trimly; looks

in again a little while, and so departs. Jo, is it thou? Well, well! Though a rejected witness who 'can't exactly say' what will be done to him in greater hands than men's, thou art not quite in outer darkness. There is something like a distant ray of light in thy muttered reason for this: 'He was very good to me, he was'!"

WINTER.

DREARY and white the heavy pall of snow
Lies on the patient breast of mother-earth.
She died, I fear me, at the New Year's birth,
And round her grave, the winds are all a-blow,
And rock, and cry, and moan, now loud, now low.
My weary heart faints 'neath the sense of dearth
Of hope, of laughter; can I think that mirth
Will rise once more, when streams forget to flow?
And yet beneath yon keen and cruel glare
The Christmas-roses, small, and pale, and sweet,
Blossom I trow, turning their faces fair,
The first faint glimpses of the sun to meet,
Give me their faith; let me their credence share,
Let me believe once more the Spring I'll greet.

HESTER.

A STORY IN TWO PARTS. PART II.

WHEN I got up from the ground, Mr. Arthur was out of sight and Hester was slowly turning away from the spot where he had left her. I threw my flowers down where they had grown; and when I had got back to the Lady Cornwall, it seemed as if ten years had passed since I had stoked up and gone to look for Hester Welsh in Calder Rough.

I didn't go near her home, nor try to see her in any way for more than a week, and what I went through in that time I couldn't even so much as try to say. When a poor man who has no larnin' to speak of gets very hard hit, he feels his trouble quite as much as if he was the most eddicated party in the world, perhaps more; but it isn't so easy for him to make a description of his feelings, which can't be hit off without a lot of grand words that he don't understand, much less use in the proper order. And so it is not to be expected of me to tell much about the next ten days after what I had seen, for though I didn't willingly brood over the matter, seeing it was past my help, yet it seemed always with me and around me, and I never was so busy or so moithered on my engine, or even so fast asleep at night, that I forgot what had befallen me. When I saw Mr. Arthur it was the worst, for to think I had always fixed on him as the man I should like to have been, seemed a sort of fore-knowledge on my part. I also felt a heavy, silent anger against him, such as men of

my class do feel if they're honest chaps, when they see a gentleman trifling and fooling with a girl who has taken a fancy to him, but whom he would not dream of marrying. I used to long to stand up to him, and tell him what I knew and what I thought, but shame for her and for myself, and a cowardly feeling of his being my betters, kept me back, and shut my mouth, and, oh! how I used to wonder when he came on to the works, or I had to go to the office, whether he'd seen her and kissed her that day, or if he was going to meet her, until I could bear it no longer, but went to the little cottage to see her for myself, for it seemed as if she must somehow know my sorrow and pity me.

But when I got there the cottage was shut up, and so it was the next day, and the next, and all I could find out when I asked questions, was that the Welshes had gone up country haymaking.

Perhaps, then, when I found she had gone clean out of my sight—for how long, or if for always, I knew not—I ought to have left off thinking of her, and have done my best to feel I was better out of her way. Instead of which I never passed a day without taking a stroll past their cottage, to see if by chance the door at last stood open; and each time I sighted the chimney from my work, it was in hopes I should at last see the blue smoke curling up against the elms that stood between it and the river. The haymaking time passed, and the corn was gathered in; the end of September had come; and the cutting below St. Martin's Hill was all but ready for the permanent way. Our engineers, especially Mr. Arthur, thought no small beer of this cutting, which can be seen for miles across the country—a great white cliff of chalk, capped with a band of green down, and a tuft of Scotch-firs top of all.

Three or four times already the directors and the company's people had been to see what a grand piece of work it was, and in the evenings the townsfolk would come out from Carchester, and say, as they walked by the river:

"Goodness gracious; how this horrid railway has spoilt St. Martin's Hill!"

All this time I had no news of Hester, so that I began to think she was gone for good and all, yet I would not leave my habit of walking past her door every day, rain or shine.

At last one Sunday, about the time when the leaves began to turn all colours, as I took my usual stroll past the empty

house, I saw coming down the lane two womenkind and a lad. They were walking wearily as if they were at the end of a long tramp. Oh, how my heart bounded to see that it was Hester, and then how it sunk down like a bird wounded on the wing to remember where and how I had seen her last. They came on, and when we met they gave me the time of day, just as if I'd been chatting to them overnight. It seemed as if they made no account of the time they had lost sight of me, although to me it had been such a 'tarnal long time.

I turned round and walked by Hester, and as I looked at her I saw that her face was worn and pale, and her eyes were heavy and very weary.

"You seem to have had a long march, Hester," said I.

"You're about right there," she answered in a tired voice.

"How far have you come?"

"I don't know; and what's more I don't care. I only know I'm dead beat, and glad it's all over."

"Well," I said, "it don't seem to me as if the change of air had been much good to you."

"No more it has; I've many a time wished myself back again."

"What do you mean?" asked Mrs. Welsh, turning round short and sharp, as her manner was, from unlocking the door. She hadn't altered, anyways.

"Well, missis," I ventured to say, "she looks thin and ill, as you can see for yourself, and them symptoms generally leads to downheartedness."

"Umph!" returned Mrs. Welsh; "you may be surprised to hear that she's had to do some hard work—haymaking, and onion-peeling, and hop-picking. It's taken the shine out of her, I tell 'ee, for she ain't fond of hard work; she likes play a pretty sight better."

She spoke so unkind and cross that I said:

"Well, no offence, missis, now that you've got back at last, for I'm sure I'm very glad to see you."

"Then if you're glad to see us, just take us as you find us, and don't get making remarks on people's looks, as are a great deal too much wrapped up in such nonsense already. Here, Jacky, go and fetch some water in the kettle while I light the fire. You and me have got to buckle to and do the work, though perhaps we're every bit as tired as other folk."

Hester didn't offer to move from the

chair she had dropped into, nor did she make any saucy answer to her mother's roughness, which was more sign than anything how much out of sorts she was.

"Well, missis," I said, "if you're tired perhaps I can be of use. Suppose you let me stoke that fire for you. You ain't goin' the way to get it alight this side Christmas."

"Oh yes," she said, without a sign of thank you, "you're quite welcome to a job to keep you from getting in the way, especially as you think yourself so clever at fire-making, and you seem to have made up your mind to stop."

"I don't know about clever," I said; "but in course there's more than one way of doing everything, and considerin' fire-making is part of my business, I ought to know how to manage it for the best."

And here I may remark that in nothing does a woman show herself so helpless as when she goes to light a fire. If so be that I have the patience to watch her fumbling, it always looks to me as if she was doing all in her power to keep it from lighting, and that was just how Mrs. Welsh was setting to work; poking and bellowsing as if she thought a big noise would frighten her fire into kindling contr'y to all common-sense, which naturally begins by warming the chimney. As soon as I had taken her place, and began by setting some straw alight to start the draught, she went out to get something, and left me alone with Hester. The moment she was gone, I turned sharp round, fearing to lose a moment.

"Hester," I said, "it grieves me to the heart to see you so downcast and woe-begone. I've waited and watched for you so. Do'ee tell me whether aught is amiss with you?"

"Don't fret about me, Will," she made answer; "I'm only a bit tired—I shall be all right directly"—which I could scarcely believe, so wan and changed she was; "and, I say, Will, make haste with that fire and come out into the lane. I want to talk to you."

After that, it wasn't more than three minutes before the fire was blazing and I was out with Hester in the pale October sunshine that struggled through the half-stripped trees. I believe that for those three minutes I had been fool enough to think she had forgotten Mr. Arthur, and been pining for me, as I knew full well he had forgotten her. Her first words, though, brought back to me a rightful

sense of things, as a splash of cold water on your face wakes you out of a warm sleep.

"What about Mr. Arthur, Will?" she asked quite plain, without any beating round the bush.

"What about Mr. Arthur? What does Mr. Arthur matter to you?"

I spoke like that, because her question, coming so straight, took me a bit back.

"It matters to me a good deal. Tell me if Mr. Arthur is still about Carchester?"

"He is."

"Can't you tell me aught about him?"

"I could tell you plenty if I chose," I said.

"Then why on earth don't you, when you can see how I long to hear about him?"

It was cruel of me, I know; but I was wrought up to anger, and if anyone blames me, let them think how—after my long weary waiting for a sight of her—her indifference to me, and her anxiety after him, stung me. Says I:

"Well, he hasn't fretted after you, if you have after him."

"How do you know that?"

"It ain't very hard to guess, seeing that he goes a-courtin' a fine, handsome young lady, and he looks so well and happy that everyone can see his job agrees with him."

"It isn't true!" she said, her face growing whiter and whiter, and then flushing up to her hair. "You're telling me lies to plague me; but it will do you no good."

"Well, you can believe me or not as you choose; I'm not lying. Anyone can tell you that Mr. Arthur has been after Miss Baird this three months, and Dr. Baird's coachman told me as they were to be married about Christmas-time."

I needn't have brought it out so plump, and as soon as I had I felt mortal sorry, for I saw such a look on her face as I had never seen on woman's face before. My heart went out in pity for her great sorrow, which I could understand and measure in part by my own.

"Hester," I said, in my longing to comfort her, now that her heart's wound had been brought to her by my hand, "is Mr. Arthur playing fast and loose with any promise he has made to you? Did he give you his word before he made love to Miss Baird—when you used to meet him up in Calder Rough? Tell me, Hester; I'll see you righted."

"What is it to you whether we met or

didn't meet?" she cried in a passion, as if she must vent her misery on someone. "Who are you, that I should tell you his secrets? What right have you to talk about bringing him to book?"

"I have this much right," I said, quite bluntlike: "that I love you a deal more than he ever did, and that, while he has forgotten that he amused himself with you, I have had you in my mind every minute. Don't break your heart after him, Hester; he's no good for the likes of you. You must put him out of your head."

"Put him out of my head and out of my heart, and take to you instead!" she said, with a hard, bitter laugh quite unlike her old saucy way. "It would be a poor exchange, Will. Besides, it's all very fine to talk like that; but how do you set about forgetting anyone? Just tell me that," which I couldn't. "Doesn't trying to forget keep you full of remembrance, like trying to go to sleep keeps you broad awake? Do you think I have to try to think about him? Why, I could no more put him out of my thoughts than I could take a flower and leave its scent, or than I could lift the shadows out of yon river and leave the water blank. You don't understand."

"Yes—yes, I do," I said. "I understand it all by what I feel for——"

"Will," she broke in, and I saw that she wasn't listening, and that nothing I could say to her about myself would catch her attention, "I want you to do something for me. I wonder if you will say 'yes' or 'no'."

"I'll say 'yes' if it's in my power," I said, for I saw clearly that she held me of no account except in as far as I could serve her.

"It's a message," she said. "I meant to have made Jacky do it; but he ain't always to be trusted to go quick and to keep his own counsel; so, as soon as I saw you were about, I thought I'd ask you to do it."

As she spoke, she drew a letter out of the breast of her dress. It was in a small, dirty envelope, and was addressed in rather large, untidy handwriting. I partly saw and partly guessed that it was addressed to Mr. Arthur.

"You know where he lives, Will, don't you? I want you to carry this to him and give it into his very own hands—to no one, mind, but to him. I feel as if I was safe with you—as if you wouldn't breathe a word to anyone." Ah! she might be very sure of

that! "That's all, Will," she went on, turning to leave me; "it ain't so very much to ask, is it? But it's a great service to me."

I took the letter in my hand and turned it over and over. I longed to say I wouldn't do the job at any price, and that she ought to have known better than ask me; but, somehow, I couldn't—the pleasure of doing her wishes took the mastery over every other feeling.

"All right, Hester," I said. "Mind you remember that one man hasn't changed, and never will."

With that I started off along the river to Carchester, walking slowly, and considering in my mind as I switched the fading rushes, how oddly things seemed to be muddled up in my life, comparing my love for Hester and my old hopes about her with my present feelings, when all I could be to her was a messenger to the man she loved as vainly as I loved her. Moreover, the words she had spoken long before, when she told my fortune and his, came back to me, and made me wonder—seeing how true she had read my future—whether indeed some part of what shall be is written out on our hands, so that we carry our fate plain to be read, and yet all unknown to us.

Mr. Arthur wasn't at his own place, and the landlady told me, when she saw I wouldn't leave the note for him, that I should find him at Dr. Baird's. So there I went, and when I'd rung the bell, I asked if I could see him. I waited in the hall about ten minutes listening to a woman's voice singing very sweetly in one of the rooms, and when the music ceased I heard Mr. Arthur speaking. After that a door opened and he came out.

"Oh, it's you, Pickles!" he said. "I hope there's nothing gone wrong at the works?"

"No, sir—nothing; I've only come to bring you this note."

He took Hester's dirty packet in his hand, and looked hard at the address before he opened it. The writing seemed quite unknown to him, for he said half to himself:

"Who the deuce is it from?"

I saw no reason to answer that question, more especially as I had my hand on the latch ready to go.

"Be good enough to wait a minute, Pickles," he said—"that is, if you have time. I'll just see if any answer is required."

I wasn't in any hurry, and what was more I wanted to see him read it—so I stayed.

He looked first of all at the name signed; when he had seen that he frowned, and drew his lips together as if he wasn't best pleased.

The letter was a very short one, and when he'd give a glance over it, he looked crosser than before, which was the more noticeable because, as I've said, he was such a good-natured gentleman.

"Who gave you this, Pickles?" he asked, quite straightforward, as if he'd nothing to blush for. I thought different, so I answered quite as straight:

"That handsome gipsy-girl who told your fortune one day on the works—her as lives down by St. Martin's Hill."

"Would it be out of your way to carry a message back to her?" he said, half hesitating; and then, without waiting for my yea or nay, he went on: "Please tell her that I am greatly surprised at her thinking of writing this letter, and that I couldn't possibly—yes, that will do—I couldn't possibly do what she asks."

"All right, sir," I made answer, and then, while I was longing to say many things to him which were tumbling about in my mind, he had gone back through the open door, and I heard the same sweet woman's voice say:

"Who was it wanted you, dear?"

I didn't care to hurry back with my message. I knew it would bring anything but comfort to poor Hester. The afternoon was darkening before I reached the cottage. Jacky was in the lane, throwing stones at the rooks as they gathered to roost on the elm-trees.

"Where's Hester?" I asked.

"Gone up t' hill."

"How long ago?"

"Not so very long."

So I started to follow her. It's a steep climb to the top of St. Martin's Hill, and a slippery job when the chalk is damp, as it was that night. As I clomb I considered in my mind how, if I found her, I should give the message Mr. Arthur had sent. At last I decided I wouldn't give it at all, unless she asked for it, seeing she had not bidden me bring one back. And, if she didn't ask, I meant just to seem as though my errand had only been to look for her. When I sighted the clump of Scotch firs, there she stood leaning against one of the trees, with her hand round her ear, listening. As she heard my step she came forward,

and even in the fading light I could see that a flash of great gladness came over her face.

"You've come to me, then, dear heart?" she said. "You've come to tell me it's all a pack of lies about Miss Baird? You've come just as I was beginning to give you up."

"Yes, Hester; I've come to see where you are," I said, though I knew her words had been meant for other ears than mine.

"Oh," she replied in a terrible sad voice, "it's only you, Will Pickles."

"What are you doing here, Hester?" I said, taking no heed of what I understood from her words—namely, that she had come up there to wait for Mr. Arthur. "It's getting late and chill, my lass; you come along home."

"I can't."

"You can't! Why not?"

"Because I'm here to wait for him."

"You'd better by half wait no longer."

"Why, didn't you find him at home?"

"No, I didn't; I had to go elsewhere."

"But you did see him, Will? you did give him the letter?"

"I did."

"Then tell me all about it. Where was he, and what did he say?"

"I'll tell you if you'll come along with me, not otherwise."

"It ain't much good saying that, Will," she answered doggedly, "for I sha'n't stir a step till you have told me."

"And I won't tell you a word," I said, just as doggedly, "until you start to come down home—so there!" and I laid a firm hand on her arm.

She didn't want to stir, but she was obliged to, and as we walked slowly on I told her, word for word, all about it, without sticking anything in or leaving anything out.

"Say it again, Will," she said, as if she couldn't follow out my story; "what was it he told you to tell me?"

She leaned against the railing at the top of our cutting, waiting for my words, and I saw her tall, slim figure and beautiful, clear-cut face stand out sharp and distinct against the far-off, faint evening sky.

"He said," I repeated slowly, "that he was much surprised at getting your letter, and that he couldn't possibly do what you asked him to, whatever that was."

"And did he speak cross?"

"He did."

"Then, Will, you'll have to carry another message from me to Mr. Arthur."

"That I sha'n't, Hester, not even to please you. I promise you I've done all the messaging betwixt you and him that I'm game for. Come with me, and make up your mind to be a sensible maid."

"This is the message, Will," she went on, as if I'd been promising to carry it instead of just the contrary. "Tell him that perhaps it's too much trouble for him to meet me at the top of the hill, where he used to—where he used to; and so, to save his steps, I'll wait for him at the bottom by the river until he chooses to come to me."

I let her have her say, as being the best way to bring her round, and when she finished I laid hold of her again, and tried to coax her along, for it seemed uncanny to leave her there with her sad and bitter thoughts.

"Let me be," she said, in such a tone that I knew she wasn't going to be persuaded. "I sha'n't go down just yet, and I sha'n't go down with you. I shall stay here, or I shall go back up hill, just as I choose, and I shall go alone. I only stirred to make you speak. I've heard everything now, and I shall come no farther."

"Well," I answered, "you can't hinder me staying here too."

"Oh, Will, Will," she cried, and her voice changed from angry to very slow and sad, "you don't know what's working in me. I must be alone. The feeling of anyone near me chokes me. If ever you felt sorry for a poor stricken creature, pity me, and let me bide alone a bit. You've been very kind to me many a time, and most of all to-day, after all the hard things I've said to you. Be kind now, Will, and go away quick—go away quick! Don't go to tell mother where I am, and don't forget the words I bade you carry to that—to him. Good-night, Will!"

"Good-night, Hester," I answered, for I saw it was no use holding out. And then—I've often thought of it since, and wondered why I did it—I took her in my arms, and held her to me, and kissed her cold, pale cheeks, and trembling lips, and her eyes, that were wet with great tears. She didn't struggle, or even seem to know what I did.

When I had gone a few paces I looked back, and saw her sitting on the ground, crouching much as I had done that day in Calder Rough when I had seen her with Mr. Arthur. I went a little farther, and looked again, but the gathering night had hid her from me altogether.

How long she stayed on the hill I shall never know, or how she made up her mind to bring her great grief to such a terrible end; whether she hesitated and hung back from the fatal leap she had resolved to make, or whether she took a bold plunge and so left her life behind her. All we ever knew was that in the early grey of the morning, when the first gang went up the line, they found a poor, mangled body lying, cold and dead, at the foot of the cutting, which I was the one to identify as the body of Hester Welsh. It was fully believed by everyone, including her mother, that she had met with an accident and fallen over the railings in the dark. I thought otherwise, but I took it to be the wisest plan to keep my thoughts to myself, and, indeed, who would have been any the better for what I could have told? Not poor Hester, certainly.

What Mr. Arthur thought, I can't say. He looked very grave when he heard the news, but then he would have looked the same about such a sad accident, no matter to whom it had happened. I never could make up my mind whether he had really deceived the girl and led her astray, or whether her pretty face had caught his fancy for a while, and his foolish words had turned her head for always. Anyhow, he married Miss Baird about Christmas-time, and there were great rejoicings at the wedding.

As to poor Hester's last message, I never gave it, for before I next saw Mr. Arthur I understood what she had meant by saying that she would wait for him beside the river, since he did not choose to climb to the top of St. Martin's Hill.

VICTIMS.

By THEO. GIFT.

Author of "*Lil Lorimer*," "*An Alibi and its Price*,"
Etc., Etc.

CHAPTER I.

"O, bel pays de Breтайne!"

"OH, but I never go to stay anywhere, you know," said Vera quietly.

Her friend looked down at her with a smile.

"That never is in the past tense, and your coming is in the future, the near future, I hope; but every future must have a beginning. Suppose you begin this summer with us?"

Leah Josephs spoke rather briskly, as indeed it was her nature to speak, though

her voice was a pleasant one enough, full and mellow, with only the very slightest shade of that rapidity of utterance and tendency to avoid dwelling on unnecessary final sounds so suggestive of the nationality to which her name and physique more frankly testified.

Not that it was at all in Miss Josephs's nature to be desirous of avoiding that testimony. She was proud of her name; proud of being a Jewess; proud of all the qualities which she believed herself to have inherited from that ancient race; of the inborn talent for music and keen intelligence so often remarkable in its daughters; of the crisply curling hair, a dark chestnut in colour, whose rebellious waves would hardly submit to be brushed up on the top of her head, and fastened there in a thick coil; of the delicately-cut aquiline nose; the dark, strongly-marked brows; and the clear brunette complexion dashed with a vivid stain of carnation on either cheek. She was not proud of being a very handsome girl, though she could not help knowing that she was one, because there are plenty of other handsome girls in the world, and because she belonged to that large class of modern young ladies who profess, and not wholly untruly, to care more about brains than beauty. Besides, Jewish beauty does not, as a rule, wear well; her mother, indeed, whom she adored, presented her with a daily and incontrovertible example of that fact; whereas Jewish brains hold their own all over the world. Therefore Leah was better pleased to pin all her little vanities to the latter score, and take her looks as a matter of course.

All the same, she could not prevent these from attracting a full share of admiring attention, or from making her a very bright and picturesque object on the day in question as she half lay, half sat on a big boulder of granite, one of many which had apparently fallen at some distant period from the high cliffs of Finisterre, which overshadowed her, and looked down at Vera St. Laurent, standing on the beach just below.

Perhaps it would be difficult to find a greater contrast than that presented by the two girls at the moment.

Leah was five-and-twenty, rather tall, with a rounded, well-developed figure, which already gave promise of a noble matronhood, while Vera, who had only left her teens three months behind her, was so slight and frail in her build that she looked even smaller and more childish than she

really was. Neither was she at all beautiful, her features being small and insignificant, her large eyes simply grey, with no shade of blue or violet in them to warrant partial friends in calling them by the latter name, and her hair a light uncurling red, brushed plainly off her face, and plaited in one thick tress, which fell some way below her waist and was confined with a black ribbon.

Even their dress was widely different. Leah's costume—albeit she was only the daughter of a hard-working London science-teacher—being almost Parisian in its dainty nauticality; a glossy dark-blue linen, the upper skirt turned up fishwife fashion and lined with crimson, the broad, light-blue linen collar flapping open to show a delicious bit of warm, tanned throat, and tied with a crimson silk handkerchief; and the small, high-arched feet shown off to the best advantage by their neat, high-heeled "brodequins" and striped blue and crimson stockings. Vera, on the other hand, whose father belonged to one of the best families in Brittany, and was the largest landed proprietor (save one) in the neighbourhood, was dressed with the most absolute plainness, not to say severity, in a gown of some thin yellowish-white material, ill-cut and ill-made, relieved only by a cambric frill at throat and wrists, and falling in plain, straight folds from her waist to her feet, which last were shod in stout, serviceable leather made after the very clumsiest provincial pattern, and ugly enough to make the girl's feet appear of elephantine proportion beside those of her friend.

But, then, Leah had earned the money to pay for her own clothes, and knew that it gave real pleasure to her father, and mother, and brothers, to see her always nicely dressed; and, besides, she was not a rather helpless little country maiden, but a quick-witted London girl, knowing how and where to buy the best things at the cheapest prices, and able to make them up afterwards as skilfully as any professed dressmaker. So perhaps there was nothing very pretentious or extravagant on her side after all.

Vera, at any rate, did not think so, but looked up at her with a silent, adoring admiration, at which the other girl only partly guessed. Vera did not think much about herself, or her own appearance, in any way. It had never occurred to her to do so, living alone as she did with a somewhat silent and undemonstrative father and mother in their ugly, old-

fashioned château, five miles from any town, and a mile and a half, even, from the tiny fishing village. Its boats could be seen flaking the horizon with their warm brown sails at the present moment, and the voices of its children floated on the breeze and were borne to them like a faint murmur across the rocky point, tufted with lichen and sea-pink, which separated them from the little hamlet.

But though Vera had seen very few girls in her own station, and had known still fewer, she was aware that Leah was a being quite different from any of these. Still more, that she was different from herself, of whom she thought, not so much contemptingly, as slightly—considering that, since she did exist at all, she probably existed in the form and with the manners and appearance best fitted to her; but that there was nothing in the least interesting about her, and certainly nothing attractive or delightful to look at and think of, as in the case of her friend.

She had not the least idea that the latter was looking down at her at that moment, thinking, "what a picture Vera would make standing there;" nor that nine out of ten artists would have concurred in the verdict without a moment's hesitation, and would hardly have wasted a second glance on the handsome, modern-looking young lady who proposed it, before turning to the slim, frail figure, in its straight, whitish-coloured gown, relieved against a background of wet, brown sand, and blue, amethystine sea; the arms hanging down so that the long cambric ruffles fell over the small, transparent-looking hands, hiding all but the tips of the interlaced fingers; the almost snowy bloom and whiteness of the skin, void, even on the cheeks, of any tinge of colour; the lifted, limpid eyes, with their child-like directness of look; and the broad, unruffled brow, off which the wind was blowing a host of tiny loose locks, which the rays of the sinking sun, falling straight athwart her, so gilt and burnished that they looked like a fluffy aureole of pale red gold.

A model for a painter certainly—a painter of the pre-Raffaellite school, that is, a Rossetti, or a Burne-Jones. Such a one could hardly have chosen a better pose or expression for her, had he been minded to paint her as St. Triphyna of Brittany herself, at the moment of her miraculous restoration to life by the holy monk, Gildas; or even as the youthful Madonna, listening to the voice of the archangel.

A look of gentle, questioning incomprehension was on her face while Leah was speaking; but the last words of the sentence were plain enough, and she answered them with a quiet shake of her head:

"Oh no; mamma would not let me."

Leah looked a little impatient.

"But I thought we were planning it the other day, and that you said you would really like to come back with me for a while?"

"Yes; and indeed I should."

"Then why should you not ask your parents? They have made me very welcome here, and you would be still more so with us, because my people know you already from my letters, and know how fond I am of you. Of course we are not 'grands seigneurs', and we don't live in a château, or——"

"Ab, Leah, don't! What does that matter?" Vera interrupted in a pained tone, and with a momentary contraction of her smooth, fair brow.

"Well, well, I am only going to say that though we are not very great or rich people, we are very comfortable ourselves, and we would try our best to make you so. You should have David and John's room—they will be gone to school by then; and it is next to mine, and faces south, so that you would be warmer than anywhere else. I should enjoy nothing so much as making it pretty for you, Vera," and Leah bent a little forward, laying her hand on the girl's shoulder and speaking in a persuasive tone.

Vera had come close to the base of the rock on which her friend was reclining. She took the hand off her shoulder and pressed it against her cheek in a mute caress, ere she answered:

"I know you would, because you are so good, though it would be quite pretty enough already, I am sure; but—oh no, there is no chance of it."

"But we have not asked yet."

"It would be no use."

"Oh, Vera, how can you tell till you have tried. And what a tame little person you are to give up even the things you wish for rather than make an effort for them!"

"Only when I know the effort would be no good. I never go anywhere without mamma. I never have but once since I was a baby, and then I only went to the De Maillys. Madame la Comtesse and the girls were at Mailly then—it was before the old Count died—and they were very kind to me, the daughters especially. They were bigger than I, and they used to share

all their bon-bons and 'chiffons' with me, and make me help them to prepare their confessions every Friday evening. Mamma did not like that when she heard of it. She thought I might get to like confession, and think it a pleasant thing; but she need not have been afraid, for it was always a very doleful hour, and I pitied them greatly. They used to be shut up in madame's little boudoir, with their prayer-books, and told not to talk to one another; but to examine themselves as to all the naughty things they had done during the week. At first I was kept out, but they used to beg so hard that I might come too, and promise that there should be no chattering or play, but that I should help them to prepare, that madame—who was very kind—consented. But I—I did not like it at all; for when Eulalie asked me if I thought she need confess having spoken a little crossly to her 'bonne' that morning, Alphonsine would always say, 'Why, yes, of course,' and remind her of other times when she had been cross or greedy, or what not. Then Eulalie would deny it, and get angry; and sometimes it ended in a quarrel, and their both beginning to cry; so that I once heard Madame la Comtesse telling Père Latroche that Heaven had blessed her with very tender-hearted children, for she had found them not unfrequently weeping over the recollection of their sins. Père Latroche did not say anything, but he smiled a little; and, indeed, Eulalie and Alphonsine always made it up after confession was over, and were very good friends till after mass next Sunday."

Leah laughed.

"Well, my dear Vera, if you come home with me, I will promise your mamma one thing—I will not ask you to prepare for confession with Naomi and me."

"No, I know you will not; but that is nothing. She would not let me go in any case. She does not think it nice for young girls to go about and pay visits by themselves. I have heard her say so. Perhaps if I had had a sister——"

"But as you have not got one, are you to stay at home for ever and a day?"

"Well, home is not an unpleasant place, especially when it has you in it," said Vera gently; "and mamma thinks young girls are better there. She says it is their right place."

"Then certainly I am in the wrong one in having accepted her invitation here," said Leah briskly. "And she also. Why did she not stay in her own? For she

certainly did leave it when she came to France and settled here, and she must have been quite young then herself."

"Ah, but that was different! That was when she married my father—at least, I suppose so," said Vera, beginning quickly, but ending with some doubtfulness.

"Oh, then you are to stay at Les Chataigniers till you are married. And when will that be—soon?"

Vera shrank back nervously.

"Soon? Oh no; I hope not. Why do you ask? I don't want ever to marry," she cried, her face paling with a look of such almost terrified distress that Leah was puzzled, and putting out her hand, drew the soft red head nearer to her knee, pressing her warm palms tenderly on it, as she said:

"Well, well, there's no need to be frightened, little one. Nobody will want to marry you against your will."

They stayed thus for some moments, the girl on the rock bending over and clasping the one who leant against it and her, as if seeking protection from both, their eyes gazing dreamily out over the sea which stretched away in long, rippling lines to the horizon. Scarce an hour back, it had been one flood of glittering, fiery sparkles, too bright for gazing at—an enchanted road, leading away, away, with never a break of rock or isle, for nearly three thousand miles to America. Now, it spread out before them—a vast expanse of dark blue, shaded with violet and green, and over-arched by a vault of clearest, purest azure, which faded and deepened into pale yellow and burning orange in the west, and was overlaid on the zenith by sundry floating masses of cloud, warmly brown in colour, and lined and fringed with ruddy-gold by the rays of the setting sun.

It was at the latter end of July, and the middle of the day had been so hot and oppressive, that the girls had been thankful when the tardy completion of the long-drawn-out half-past four o'clock dinner had allowed them to get their hats and escape to the sea for freedom and fresh air; but it was nearly seven by now. A cool breeze had sprung up, and was blowing off the ocean. The sun itself had slipped behind the rocky point afore-mentioned, and, though the upper face of the rugged brown cliffs, with their frosting of hoary lichens, still glowed with a warm and coppery flame, the crevices at their base, and the sands below, heaped here and there with tangled

wreaths of orange-tawny seaweed, were already wrapped in shadow; while the steep, ravine-like opening to the path by which the girls had descended to the little bay, presented a dark and almost threatening appearance in contrast to the brightness and glow above.

Vera started suddenly.

"We must go home," she said; "it is getting late."

"It is only seven," said Leah, looking at her watch; "but it is uphill most of the way. Yes, I suppose you are right."

"For, if I am not in when coffee is served, you know—and I do think Gervais likes to make it earlier whenever there is a nice supper in the kitchen—there will be no one to hand it to papa."

"Or to M. le Comte," said Leah with a half glance at her friend.

"Nor to M. le Comte," said Vera simply.

"Yes, we must be going. Shall I get your painting things, Leah?"

"My dear child, I can do that myself."

And springing down from her perch, Leah tripped off lightly to a spot at a little distance, where a small canvas, a tin-box, and a sailor's hat of dark-blue straw, half filled with paint rags and tubes of oil-colour, showed what had been her occupation a little while before. With Vera's help, these were soon gathered up now, and as soon as she had tied securely on a remarkably ugly, flapping Leghorn hat, of a fashion which was considered the ne plus ultra of refined gentility in Madame St. Laurent's young days, the two were ready to set out on their homeward route.

It led them up the steep and stony path above-mentioned, with only the bare, sloping walls of the cliff on either side for some little way; but after a while these became lower, more perpendicular, and overhung with vegetation—long grasses, garlands of glistening ivy, bryony, and clematis, which wreathed and tangled together to form a verdant mantle over the rugged banks, and, mingling with the stunted oaks and thorns along the top, met and interlaced themselves overhead.

Down in this "cavée," as Normandy folk would have called it, it was almost twilight, and the girls' feet sank deeply in the loose, shingly soil, or slipped upon the big, rounded stones, which here and there showed their grey and wrinkled surfaces through the looser substance which had washed over them long since, when the lane was still the bed of a swiftly-flowing stream. It was not unfrequently

that now in winter and flood-time; but, as it was chiefly used for carting sand and seaweed up from the beach, the people simply left it unattempted at those seasons, and resigned themselves to the more circuitous village route.

As it was, the girls were glad to pause and rest for a minute or two at the top before going on. They had reached a little plateau on the side of a bleak, heathy hill. A small cluster of untidy-looking farm-buildings was on the right, and, on the left, divided from them by the road, which wound on and upwards still, the church, perched on a steep, grassy knoll, and seeming to look down protectingly on the little fishing village, which nestled about half a mile below it, and quite out of sight from where the girls stood, in a sheltered hollow of the cliffs. Down in the lane, whence, even at noonday, the steep banks and over-arching foliage almost excluded the rays of the sun, it had been already dusk. But up here the atmosphere was filled with sunset light; the vane on the top of the farmhouse chimney twinkled like a fiery finger; and though the gold-brown clouds had changed to purple and copper-colour, and the distant sea to violet, the whole of the western sky was flushed with gold and crimson flame, against which the dark brow of the hill, and the pierced, grey stone campanile of the little church, worn with centuries of winds and rains, stood out as if carved in ebony.

"How beautiful!" said Leah softly. "One does not see a picture like that in London, except now and then in the galleries. I wish I could sketch it from memory. Just look at the little orange lights in the church-windows, and that dark group of people standing outside the porch. I suppose they are waiting for some service. Don't they give it just the touch of humanity which is wanted?"

Vera went forward to look.

"I don't think there is any service there at this time on week days," she said, but stopped short, for at that moment the big bell in the church-tower swung out with a single, deep, solemn sound thrice repeated, and immediately afterwards the little group of people divided, and there came out of the church a priest in cassock and stole, holding something in his clasped hands against his breast, and followed by a small, white-surpliced acolyte carrying a very faded and torn old red-silk umbrella over his head. Another acolyte similarly clad went before ringing a small bell, as if to give warning

of their approach; and then the people, who had dropped on their knees the moment the priest appeared, rose and followed reverently in the rear; the little procession winding slowly down the road leading to the village, until it disappeared from view, and only the tinkling sound of the little bell could be heard getting fainter and fainter as it melted away in the distance.

"It is the sacrament being taken to some sick person in the village," Vera said, as the two girls turned again upon their homeward way. "I am afraid there is a good deal of sickness in the village at present; for, don't you remember? we heard the church-bell before when we were going down to the beach; and Joanna told me that when she went to the village, yesterday, for some candles, Mère Conan was crying so dreadfully, she could scarcely serve her, and she said her married daughter was dying of something, and they were afraid the children would catch it."

"Something infectious, then. You ought to be careful if you go about among the villagers much."

"Oh, but I don't. Haven't you seen that? I used to want to very much when I was younger. I had a book full of stories—very pretty, sad ones most of them—about the peasant people; and I thought I should like very much to go to their houses and talk to them; but I don't think mamma quite liked the idea, so I did not speak of it again. She said the villagers here were very rough, and dirty, and superstitious, and she was afraid—I don't quite remember what she was afraid of, but I saw she did not much fancy my going among them."

Leah gave her shoulders the least little shake in the world. It said, or it would have liked to say, "She doesn't want you, then, to try and do them good, or make them better," and it would also have liked to remark that well-to-do Jews regarded their poorer brethren as having a close and peculiar claim on them for kindness and sympathy, and this, not only as being common heirs of the same Divine dispensation, but simply as being weak, and poor, and ignorant, and, therefore, appealing more nearly to the strong, the wealthy, and educated among their people. But clear as were Miss Josepha's own opinions on these subjects, she abstained from putting them into words, having noticed once or twice before that a hastily-uttered remark of this sort had evidently given Vera real pain by

showing her for the first time that all good people in the world do not necessarily hold the same views—a revelation always distressing to young minds.

As it was, Vera said after a pause :

"You would go into the people's houses, I suppose, if you lived here, Leah? You are always talking to them as it is."

"Yes," said Leah quietly, "I should, but that is different. They interest me from an artistic standpoint now, but if I were living among them——"

"And were not an artist?" Vera put in.

"Ah yes, I suppose it is different for me."

And Leah said nothing, only smiling a little to herself at how completely the other girl had misunderstood her, in not guessing that what she had been going to add was that, in that case, they would have been doubly interesting because belonging to her and she to them.

While the girls talked, the road, or rather beaten track, which they were traversing had led them across a stretch of bare, treeless heath grown over with clumps of furze-bushes, and dotted here and there with big boulders of grey rock; but soon this gave way to fields of beetroot and buckwheat, the latter now in full flower, and looking, under the twilight sky, like a soft, pinkish white veil spread over the land, and ruffled and rumpling in the wind. Then the road took a sudden dip downwards. They passed two or three rather dilapidated-looking cottages, the women standing at the doors knitting and talking, in their big white caps, short, bright-coloured woollen skirts, and huge sabots; a pond with two or three heavy, patient-looking farm-horses standing cooling their legs in it; a long stretch of plum and apple orchard; and, finally, a handsome, scrolled iron gateway between two massive stone posts. Here the girls stopped, and, entering, found themselves in an avenue of somewhat shabby and contorted-looking chestnut-trees leading to a grey stone house, moderately large, and built in the usual French château style, with high-pitched, slated roof, a quaint little conical tower at one end, and a primly gravelled terrace,

with stone steps leading up to it, running round three sides.

This was Les Chataigniers, as it was generally called in contradistinction to The Château, an older and far larger and more important residence, the property of the Sieurs de Mailly, the boundary-walls of which extended within half a mile of those of M. St. Laurent; and here the two friends quickened their pace, arriving at the front-door at last in a somewhat breathless condition.

"Has coffee gone in?" Vera asked of the servant who opened it to them, and being answered in the affirmative, only paused to fling her hat on to a table in the wide stone entry, and press her hands over her hair so as to smooth it a little before proceeding to the drawing-room.

Leah, however, not feeling that there was the same need for her immediate appearance, passed on to her own apartment, where she changed her dress leisurely, shaking out and folding the cotton one with great care, and pausing now and then to peep out of the window at the pale, rosy flush still lingering in the blue over the apple-trees. It was more than half an hour before she went down to the drawing-room, and when she did so, the first thing that caught her eye was a small whist-table, lit by two tall wax candles, whereat three people were playing dummy whist; while Vera stood by the shoulder of one of them, handing him his cup of coffee.

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THE

CHRISTMAS NUMBER

OF

ALL THE YEAR ROUND,

WHICH CONSISTS OF A COMPLETE STORY,

BY WALTER BESANT,

AUTHOR OF "THE CAPTAINS' ROOM," "A GLORIOUS FORTUNE," ETC.,

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IMPORTANT FAMILY MEDICINE.

TRADE



MARK.

CAMOMILE PILLS,

THE

MOST CERTAIN PRESERVER OF HEALTH,

A MILD, YET SPEEDY, SAFE, AND

**EFFECTUAL AID IN CASES OF INDIGESTION
AND ALL STOMACH COMPLAINTS,**

AND, AS A NATURAL CONSEQUENCE, A

PURIFIER OF THE BLOOD AND SWEETENER OF THE WHOLE SYSTEM.

INDIGESTION is a weakness or want of power of the digestive juices in the stomach to convert what we eat and drink into healthy matter, for the proper nourishment of the whole system. It is caused by everything which weakens the system in general, or the stomach in particular. From it proceed nearly all the diseases to which we are liable; for it is very certain, that if we could always keep the stomach right we should only die by old age or accident. Indigestion produces a great variety of unpleasant sensations; amongst the most prominent of its miserable effects are a want of, or an inordinate appetite, sometimes attended with a constant craving for drink, a distension or feeling of enlargement of the stomach, flatulency, heartburn, pain in the stomach, acidity, unpleasant taste in the mouth, perhaps sickness, rumbling noise in the bowels: in some cases of depraved digestion there is nearly a complete disrelish for food, but still the appetite is not greatly impaired, as at the stated period of meals persons so afflicted can eat heartily, although without much gratification; a long train of nervous symptoms are also frequent attendants, general debility, great languidness, and incapacity for exertion. The minds of persons so afflicted frequently become irritable and desponding, and great anxiety is observable in the countenance; they appear thoughtful, melancholy, and dejected, under great apprehension of some imaginary danger, will start at any unexpected noise or

occurrence, and become so agitated that they require some time to calm and collect themselves; yet for all this the mind is exhilarated without much difficulty; pleasing events, society, will for a time dissipate all appearance of disease; but the excitement produced by an agreeable change vanishes soon after the cause has gone by. Other symptoms are, violent palpitations, restlessness, the sleep disturbed by frightful dreams and startings, and affording little or no refreshment; occasionally there is much moaning, with a sense of weight and oppression upon the chest, nightmare, &c.

It is almost impossible to enumerate all the symptoms of this first invader upon the constitution, as in a hundred cases of *Indigestion* there will probably be something peculiar to each; but be they what they may, they are all occasioned by the food becoming a burden rather than a support to the stomach; and in all its stages the medicine most wanted is that which will afford speedy and effectual assistance to the digestive organs, and give energy to the nervous and muscular systems—nothing can more speedily, or with more certainty, effect so desirable an object than *Norton's Extract of Camomile Flowers*. The herb has from time immemorial been highly esteemed in England as a grateful anodyne, imparting an aromatic bitter to the taste, and a pleasing degree of warmth and strength to the stomach; and in all cases of indigestion, gout in the stomach,

windy colic, and general weakness, it has for ages been strongly recommended by the most eminent practitioners as very useful and beneficial. The great, indeed only, objection to its use has been the large quantity of water which it takes to dissolve a small part of the flowers and which must be taken with it into the stomach. It requires a quarter of a pint of boiling water to dissolve the soluble portion of one drachm of Camomile Flowers; and, when one or even two ounces may be taken with advantage, it must at once be seen how impossible it is to take a proper dose of this wholesome herb in the form of tea; and the only reason why it has not long since been placed the very first in rank of all restorative medicines is, that in taking it the stomach has always been loaded with water which tends in a great measure to counteract, and very frequently wholly to destroy the effect. It must be evident that loading a weak stomach with a large quantity of water, merely for the purpose of conveying into it a small quantity of medicine, must be injurious; and that the medicine must possess powerful renovating properties only to counteract the bad effects likely to be produced by the water. Generally speaking, this has been the case with Camomile Flowers, a herb possessing the highest restorative qualities, and when properly taken, decidedly the most speedy restorer, and the most certain preserver of health.

NORTON'S CAMOMILE PILLS

are prepared by a peculiar process, accidentally discovered, and known only to the proprietor, and which he firmly believes to be one of the most valuable modern discoveries in medicine, by which all the essential and extractive matter of more than an ounce of the flowers is concentrated in four moderate-sized pills. Experience has afforded the most ample proof that they possess all the fine aromatic and stomachic properties for which the herb has been esteemed; and, as they are taken into the stomach unencumbered by any diluting or indigestible substance, in the same degree has their benefit been more immediate and decided. Mild in their operation and pleasant in their effect, they may be taken at any age, and under

any circumstances, without danger or inconvenience. A person exposed to cold and wet a whole day or night could not possibly receive any injury from taking them, but, on the contrary, they would effectually prevent a cold being taken. After a long acquaintance with and strict observance of the medicinal properties of *Norton's Camomile Pills*, it is only doing them justice to say, that they are really the most valuable of all TONIC MEDICINES. By the word tonic is meant a medicine which gives strength to the stomach sufficient to digest in proper quantities all wholesome food, which increases the power of every nerve and muscle of the human body, or, in other words, invigorates the nervous and muscular systems. The solidity or firmness of the whole tissue of the body, which so quickly follows the use of *Norton's Camomile Pills*, their certain and speedy effects in repairing the partial dilapidations from time or intemperance, and their lasting salutary influence on the whole frame, is most convincing, that in the smallest compass is contained the largest quantity of the tonic principle, of so peculiar a nature as to pervade the whole system, through which it diffuses health and strength sufficient to resist the formation of disease, and also to fortify the constitution against contagion; as such, their general use is strongly recommended as a preventative during the prevalence of malignant fever or other infectious diseases, and to persons attending sick rooms they are invaluable, as in no one instance have they ever failed in preventing the taking of illness, even under the most trying circumstances.

As *Norton's Camomile Pills* are particularly recommended for all stomach complaints or indigestion, it will probably be expected that some advice should be given respecting diet, though after all that has been written upon the subject, after the publication of volume upon volume, after the country has, as it were, been inundated with practical essays on diet, as a means of prolonging life, it would be unnecessary to say more, did we not feel it our duty to make the humble endeavour of inducing the public to regard them not, but to adopt that course which is dictated by

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nature, by reason, and by common sense. Those persons who study the wholesomes, and are governed by the opinion of writers on diet, are uniformly both unhealthy in body and weak in mind. There can be no doubt that the palate is designed to inform us what is proper for the stomach, and of course that must best instruct us what food to take and what to avoid: we want no other adviser. Nothing can be more clear than that those articles which are agreeable to the taste were by nature intended for our food and sustenance, whether liquid or solid, foreign or of native production; if they are pure and unadulterated, no harm need be dreaded by their use; they will only injure by abuse. Consequently, whatever the palate approves, eat and drink always in moderation, but never in excess; keeping in mind that the first process of digestion is performed in the mouth, the second in the stomach; and that, in order that the stomach may be able to do its work properly, it is requisite the first process should be well performed; this consists in masticating or chewing the solid food, so as to break down and separate the fibres and small substances of meat and vegetable, mixing them well, and blending the whole together before they are swallowed; and it is particularly urged upon all to take plenty of time to their meals and never eat in haste. • If you conform to this short and simple, but comprehensive advice, and find that there are various things which others eat and drink with pleasure and without inconvenience, and which would be pleasant to yourself only that they disagree, you may at once conclude that the fault is in the stomach, that it does not possess the power which it ought to do, that it wants assistance, and the sooner that assistance is afforded the better. A very short trial of this medicine will best prove how soon it will put the stomach in a condition to perform with ease all the work which nature intended for it. By its use you will soon be able to enjoy, in moderation, whatever is agreeable to the taste, and unable to name one individual article of food which disagrees with or sits unpleasantly on the stomach. Never forget that a small meal well digested affords more nourishment to the system than a large one, even of the

same food, when digested imperfectly. Let the dish be ever so delicious, ever so enticing, a variety offered, the bottle ever so enchanting, never forget that temperance tends to preserve health, and that health is the soul of enjoyment. But should an impropriety be at any time, or ever so often committed, by which the stomach becomes overloaded or disordered, render it immediate aid by taking a dose of *Norton's Camomile Pills*, which will so promptly assist in carrying off the burden thus imposed upon it that all will soon be right again.

It is most certainly true that every person in his lifetime consumes a quantity of noxious matter, which if taken at one meal would be fatal: it is these small quantities of noxious matter, which are introduced into our food, either by accident or wilful adulteration, which we find so often upset the stomach, and not unfrequently lay the foundation of illness, and perhaps final ruination to health. To preserve the constitution, it should be our constant care, if possible, to counteract the effect of these small quantities of unwholesome matter; and whenever, in that way, an enemy to the constitution finds its way into the stomach, a friend should immediately be sent after it, which would prevent its mischievous effects, and expel it altogether; no better friend can be found — no, none which will perform the task with greater certainty than **NORTON'S CAMOMILE PILLS**. And let it be observed that the longer this medicine is taken the less it will be wanted, and it can in no case become habitual, as its entire action is to give energy and force to the stomach, which is the spring of life, the source from which the whole frame draws its succour and support. After an excess of eating or drinking, and upon every occasion of the general health being at all disturbed, these **PILLS** should be immediately taken, as they will stop and eradicate disease at its commencement. Indeed, it is most confidently asserted, that by the timely use of this medicine only, and a common degree of caution, any person may enjoy all the comforts within his reach, may pass through life without an illness, and with the certainty of attaining a healthy **OLD AGE**.

On account of their volatile properties,

they must be kept in bottles; and if 2s. 9d. each, with full directions. The closely corked their qualities are neither large bottle contains the quantity of three impaired by time nor injured by any change small ones, or PILLS equal to fourteen of climate whatever. Price 13½d. and ounces of CAMOMILE FLOWERS.

SOLD BY NEARLY ALL RESPECTABLE MEDICINE VENDORS.

Be particular to ask for "NORTON'S PILLS," and do not be persuaded to purchase an imitation.

A CLEAR COMPLEXION!!!

GODFREY'S EXTRACT OF ELDER FLOWERS

IS strongly recommended for Softening, Improving, Beautifying, and Preserving the SKIN, and giving it a blooming and charming appearance. It will completely remove Tan, Sunburn, Redness, &c., and by its Balsamic and Healing qualities render the skin soft, pliable, and free from dryness, &c., clear it from every humour, pimple, or eruption; and by continuing its use only a short time, the skin will become and continue soft and smooth, and the complexion perfectly clear and beautiful.

Sold in Bottles, price 2s. 9d., by all Medicine Vendors and Perfumers.

STEEDMAN'S SOOTHING POWDERS, FOR CHILDREN CUTTING TEETH.

THE value of this Medicine has been largely tested in all parts of the world and by all grades of society for upwards of fifty years.

Its extensive sale has induced **spurious imitations**, in some of which the **outside Label** and the **coloured Paper** enclosing the Packet of Powders so closely resemble the Original as to have deceived many Purchasers. The Proprietor therefore feels it due to the Public to give a **special caution** against such imitations.

All purchasers are therefore requested carefully to observe that the words "**JOHN STEEDMAN, Chemist, Walworth, Surrey,**" are engraved on the Government Stamp affixed to each Packet, in **White Letters on a Red Ground**, without which none are genuine. The name STEEDMAN is spelt with *two EEs*.

Prepared ONLY at Walworth, Surrey, and Sold by all Chemists and Medicine Vendors in Packets, 1s. 1½d., and 2s. 9d. each.

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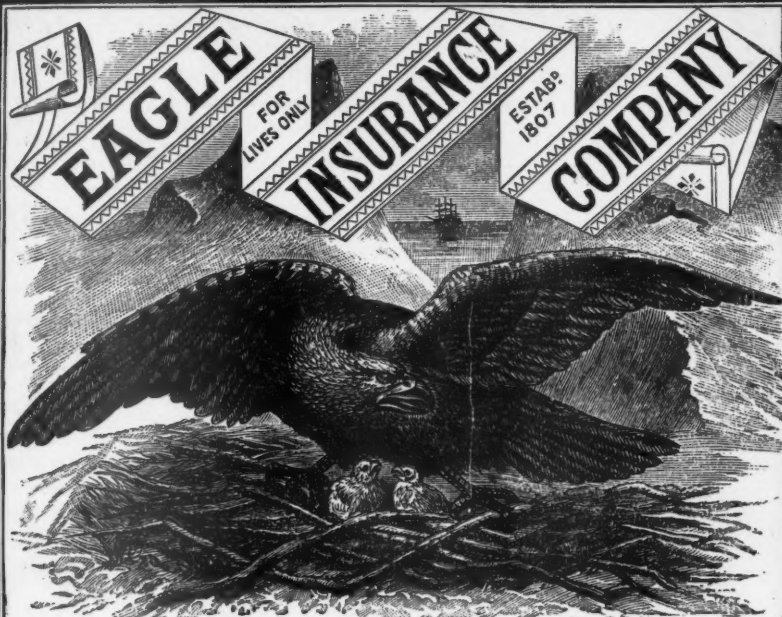
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79, PALL MALL, LONDON.

THE Company affords undoubted security to Insurers, and from its judicious management in the past, and from the ample reserves that have been made to meet all contingencies, is able to anticipate an increasing amount of success, and the consequent augmentation of the future Bonuses to its Policy-holders.

The following figures show the progress of the Company in these respects:—

In 1877 the Assurance Fund, invested upon first-class securities, was equal to 32 per cent. of the Sums Assured and Bonus added thereto; and to 11 times the amount of the Annual Premiums payable.

In 1882 to 36 per cent. of the Sums Assured and Bonus added thereto; and to 13 times the Annual Premiums payable.

In 1884 to 37 per cent. of the Sums Assured and Bonus added thereto; and to 13 times the Annual Premiums payable.

In June, 1877, the amount of Profits declared

by the Company was £183,883

In December, 1882 " " " " £218,182

Eagle Insurance Company.

OF these sums the amount divisible amongst the Participating Policy-holders in cash was equal to the following percentage of the premiums paid during the two quinquenniums:—

1877 ... From 12 to 22 %

1882 ... „ 13 „ 23 „

according to the age of the Assured at entry.

The principle upon which the surplus is distributed has always commended itself to the Board as the most equitable way of dividing the quinquennial surplus; each Policy-holder having an amount in cash allotted to him in proportion to the excess of premiums contributed during the given period, and being at liberty on the occasion of each division either to receive the amount so allotted at once; or to have it converted into a Reversionary Bonus payable with the sum assured, or applied in reduction of the annual premium; as he may deem most advantageous to himself, and irrespective of age or condition of health.

In addition to the Bonus thus declared periodically, interim Bonuses are given on Policies of five years old and upwards which become claims between any two valuations, thereby practically securing to the Assured an Annual Bonus.

During the past thirty-seven years the
Company has paid in Claims . . . **£7,872,396**

And divided Bonuses amongst the
Assured (exclusive of those taken
in reduction of premium) amount-
ing to **£1,012,761**

Claims are paid three months after the death of the Life Assured, provided that satisfactory proof of death shall have been furnished in the meantime.

The Directors are prepared to grant Loans on all Policies to the absolute owners, or to pay a fair and liberal Surrender value, should it be desired to discontinue the Assurance, thereby protecting the Assured against loss from inability to meet the premiums.

Eagle Insurance Company.

Financial Position of the Company on the 31st December, 1884.

Sums Assured and Bonus £7,602,497

Total Funds [*including paid-up Capital*
of £167,867] **£2,973,945**
[Being just 40 per cent. of the Sums Assured and Bonus.]

Subscribed Capital	£1,500,000
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Annual Income £347,179

Net New Premiums in 1884 ... **£10,876**

The Expenses of Management are less than 5 per cent. of the gross income.

ANNUAL PREMIUMS FOR ASSURANCE OF £100 ON A SINGLE LIFE.
WITH PROFITS.

	<i>ℓ</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>		<i>ℓ</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>		<i>ℓ</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>		<i>ℓ</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>		<i>ℓ</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
11	1	16	2	21	2	2	4	31	2	11	10	41	3	7	4	51	4	14	10
12	1	16	8	22	2	3	1	32	2	13	1	42	3	9	5	52	4	18	6
13	1	17	2	23	2	3	11	33	2	14	4	43	3	11	8	53	5	2	4
14	1	17	9	24	2	4	9	34	2	15	8	44	3	14	0	54	5	6	6
15	1	18	4	25	2	5	7	35	2	17	1	45	3	16	6	55	5	10	11
16	1	18	11	26	2	6	6	36	2	18	7	46	3	19	2	56	5	15	7
17	1	19	6	27	2	7	6	37	3	0	2	47	4	1	11	57	6	0	7
18	2	0	2	28	2	8	6	38	3	1	10	48	4	4	10	58	6	5	10
19	2	0	10	29	2	9	7	39	3	3	7	49	4	8	0	59	6	11	5
20	2	1	7	30	2	10	8	40	3	5	5	50	4	11	4	60	6	17	4

ANNUAL PREMIUMS for an Assurance payable at a **SPECIFIED AGE,**
OR AT DEATH PREVIOUSLY.

Age not above	To receive £100, with Bonus, at the Ages of												Age not above	To receive £100, with Bonus, at the Ages of													
	45			50			55			60				45			50			55			60				
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16	3	6	0	2	16	11	2	10	8	2	6	3	26	5	2	3	4	1	3	3	8	2	2	19	8		
17	3	8	5	2	18	8	2	12	0	2	7	4	27	5	8	2	4	4	10	3	10	8	3	1	6		
18	3	11	0	3	0	6	2	13	4	2	8	4	28	5	14	9	4	8	10	3	13	4	3	3	5		
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22	4	3	9	3	9	4	2	19	9	2	13	4	32	7	11	9	5	9	4	4	6	5	3	12	8		
23	4	7	9	3	11	11	3	1	8	2	14	10	33	8	4	10	5	16	0	4	10	6	3	15	5		
24	4	12	1	3	14	9	3	3	8	2	16	4	34	9	0	4	6	3	7	4	11	3	18	4			
25	4	16	11	3	17	10	3	5	10	2	18	0	35	9	19	1	6	12	1	4	19	10	4	1	7		

Rates of Premiums for other Ages will be found in the Company's Prospectus.

Eagle Insurance Company.

Directors.

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CHARLES BISCHOFF, Esq., DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN.

THOMAS ALLEN, Esq.

THE RIGHT HON. SIR WILLIAM HART DYKE, BART., M.P.

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HENRY PAULL, Esq.

HENRY ROSE, Esq.

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Actuary and Secretary.

GEORGE HUMPHREYS, Esq., M.A., F.I.A.

REDUCED RATES FOR THE FIRST FIVE YEARS.

Policies under this Table enter the Profit Class after being in existence Five Years.

	1st 5 years. — WITHOUT PROFITS.	Remainder of Life. — WITH PROFITS.		1st 5 years. — WITHOUT PROFITS.	Remainder of Life. — WITH PROFITS.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.
26	1 9 1	2 10 10	36	1 12 7	3 5 2
27	1 9 3	2 12 0	37	1 13 6	3 7 0
28	1 9 5	2 13 2	38	1 14 6	3 9 0
29	1 9 8	2 14 5	39	1 15 7	3 11 2
30	1 10 0	2 15 8	40	1 16 8	3 13 5
31	1 10 3	2 17 1	41	1 17 11	3 15 10
32	1 10 7	2 18 6	42	1 19 2	3 18 4
33	1 10 11	3 0 0	43	2 0 7	4 1 2
34	1 11 3	3 1 8	44	2 2 0	4 4 0
35	1 11 8	3 3 4	45	2 3 7	4 7 2

Annual Reports, Prospectuses, and Forms may be had, or will be sent, Post-free, on application at the Office, or to any of the Company's Agents.

The Funds now amount to
£3,619,661.

and Annual Income to
£377,000.

Established 1823.



ECONOMIC

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Assurance
Society.

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Right Hon. LORD SUDELEY.

Secretary.—JOHN RALPH GRIMES, Esq.

Actuary.—RICHARD CHARLES FISHER, Esq.

THE Directors having carefully revised their rates for Non-Participating Assurances, Policies may now be effected at proportionately low rates of Premium, Without Profits. The attention of those who desire to effect Policies at the LOWEST PRESENT COST, is invited to the Society's new Prospectus.

BONUS POLICIES.

RATES OF PREMIUM.

From 9 to 26 per cent. less than those charged by other Life Offices.

RESULTS OF ECONOMICAL MANAGEMENT.

LARGE BONUSES HAVE BEEN DECLARED.

Instances are on record of Policies having been trebled by Bonuses.

SPECIMENS OF POLICIES IN FORCE AT VALUATION, 1883.

Policy effected in the Year.	Age at Entry.	Sum originally Assured.	Bonus to 1883 inclusive.	Total Sum Assured.	Percentage of Bonus on Premiums paid.	Surrender Value of Policy and Bonus.	Equivalent Free Policy, including Bonus to 31st Dec., 1883.
		£	£	£	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1824	32	1,000	2,013	3,013	145 1 8	2,401 0 0	2,927 0 0
1829	29	500	604	1,104	102 14 10	782 10 0	1,039 0 0
1834	31	600	656	1,256	96 5 8	832 16 0	1,157 0 0
1839	43	200	284	484	94 18 8	357 0 0	453 0 0
	30	1,000	844	1,844	84 15 5	1,064 10 0	1,621 0 0
1844	40	1,000	951	1,951	79 11 8	1,235 12 0	1,729 0 0
	30	1,000	689	1,689	77 16 10	853 16 0	1,404 0 0
1849	45	2,000	1,716	3,716	68 6 5	2,298 0 0	3,192 0 0
	30	500	267	767	68 19 0	320 6 0	585 0 0
1854	47	5,000	3,250	8,250	55 15 10	4,592 6 0	6,613 0 0
	25	500	189	689	64 12 0	210 8 0	433 0 0
1859	51	5,000	3,123	8,123	45 15 5	4,267 16 0	6,122 0 0
	39	1,000	360	1,360	49 17 5	509 8 0	889 0 0
1864	52	1,000	370	1,370	39 6 5	586 8 0	871 0 0
	36	500	124	624	47 2 10	165 6 0	326 0 0
1869	45	4,000	876	4,876	40 13 10	1,287 14 0	2,278 0 0
	30	4,000	687	4,687	51 15 0	715 10 0	1,723 0 0
1874	40	3,000	402	3,402	44 17 0	494 0 0	1,033 0 0
	25	2,000	227	2,227	58 4 0	180 2 0	354 0 0

The Conditions will be found most liberal as regards—

SURRENDER VALUES,	PAYMENTS OF CLAIMS,
WHOLE WORLD POLICIES,	FULLY PAID-UP POLICIES,
LIMITS OF FREE RESIDENCE,	LOANS ON THE SOCIETY'S POLICIES,
REINSTATEMENT OF LAPSED POLICIES.	

Prospectuses may be obtained on application to the Secretary.

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PROVIDENT LIFE OFFICE

50, Regent Street, W., & 14, Cornhill, E.C.,
LONDON.

HALF-CREDIT SYSTEM.

Applicable only to With-Bonus Policies for the whole Term of Life (Table A in Prospectus), and to Lives not exceeding 60 Years of Age.

Under this system, one-half the Premium only is payable during the first 5, 7, or 10 years, in the option of the Assured; the other half-premium remains a charge against the Policy, bearing 5 per cent. interest, payable in advance.

The arrears of half-premium may be paid off at any time, or be deducted from the sum assured when the claim arises, or from the Office Value in case of surrender.

This system offers the advantage of a low Premium during the early years of life.

SURRENDER VALUES.

Surrender Values are allowed after the payment of ONE FULL YEAR'S premium as distinct from a Half-Credit Premium.

The *minimum* values are as follows:—

With-Bonus Policies	33 per cent.	of Premium paid.
Without-Bonus Policies	25	" "
Endowment Policies	40	" "

These Values increase with the age and duration of the Policies.

It is the practice of the Office to pay the surrender value of a lapsed Policy if applied for within six years.

PAID-UP POLICIES IN LIEU OF SURRENDER VALUES.

Persons who may be unable through adverse circumstances or otherwise to continue their Assurances can, if preferred, receive a *Paid-Up* Policy computed upon liberal terms, in lieu of the Surrender Value in Cash.

LOANS ON POLICIES.

LOANS are advanced by the Office, upon the deposit of a *Provident Policy*, when the Surrender Value amounts to £10.

Prospectuses and further Information to be obtained at the Head Office, or of any of the Agents.

CHARLES STEVENS, *Secretary.*

FOUNDED 1806.

PROVIDENT LIFE OFFICE.

EXISTING ASSURANCES exceed...	...	...	£7,000,000
INVESTED FUNDS	...	...	2,388,955
ANNUAL INCOME	...	...	315,571
CLAIMS AND SURRENDERS PAID exceed	...	...	7,500,000
BONUSES DECLARED	...	...	2,629,814

LARGE BONUSES WITH UNSURPASSED SECURITY.

Without-Profit Policies at exceptionally low rates.

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LONDON.



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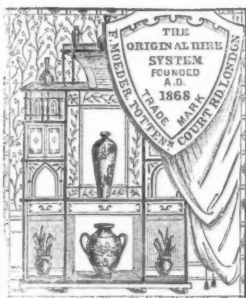
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